“What Do You Mean ‘In My Own Words’?” Undergraduate ESL Writers’ Paraphrasing Experiences in an Advanced Academic Writing Course

DISSERTATION

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Qian Du

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Dissertation Committee:

Professor Alan Hirvela, Advisor

Professor Leslie Moore

Professor George Newell

Abstract

This dissertation examined the lived experiences of a group of international undergraduate students as they learned and practiced paraphrasing in an advanced ESL composition course at an American university, seeking to unveil the complexities involved for novice L2 writers to acquire the often taken-for-granted skill of paraphrasing. Focusing on how nine novice L2 academic writers experienced the process of learning to paraphrase, this study contributes an emic perspective that is missing in current second language writing literature as related to textual appropriation and paraphrasing in particular.

Informed by the theoretical perspectives of academic socialization and language socialization, data collection utilized such instruments as questionnaire, classroom and tutorial observation, field notes, audio recording, document gathering, think-aloud protocol, and (text-based) interviews. Participants of the study included nine international undergraduate students originally from China, the course instructor, and the course coordinator. By following the nine student participants throughout the term, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive portrait of how these novice L2 writers negotiated the learning of the unfamiliar textual appropriation skill of paraphrasing.

Findings of this study reveal that the nine novice L2 academic writers struggled to fully understand the values and purposes of paraphrasing as a strategy to actively interact with source text material and develop their arguments in writing. Viewing paraphrasing

largely as a linguistic exercise, the participants demonstrated a general reluctance to utilize the skill in their research paper writing. In fact, these novice L2 writers were only able to develop a rather superficial understanding of paraphrasing, which prevented them from being fully socialized into the practice. The study also shows that the participants' previous literacy experiences in their native language Chinese influenced how they understood the practice of paraphrasing and source-based writing in general, and that the gaps between these learners' L1 literacy experiences with regard to textual appropriation and the expectations in English academic writing contributed to the linguistic and rhetorical challenges that they encountered in paraphrasing.

Contrary to the common conceptualization of paraphrasing as a basic and simple activity, the practice itself is a highly complex one that poses major challenges for L2 writers new to English academic writing. By examining how a group of novice L2 academic writers made sense of the practice of paraphrasing and how they utilized this skill in source-based writing tasks, this study highlights the importance for second language writing researchers to adopt a learner's perspective and re-examine concepts and practices often taken for granted by experienced academic writers.

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Vita

2007..B.A. English Language and Literature, Beijing Foreign Studies University

2008..M.A. Foreign and Second Language Education, Ohio State University

2008 to present ....Graduate Teaching Associate, Foreign and Second Language Education, The Ohio State University

Publications

Hirvela, A., & Du, Q. (2013). “Why am I paraphrasing?”: Undergraduate ESL writers’ Engagement with source-based academic writing and reading. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 12*(2), 87-98.

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Fields of Study

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Chapter 1: Introduction

It was 5:30 on a Friday afternoon. As an ESL (English as a Second Language) writing instructor, I was having the 15^{th} tutorial of the day with one of my undergraduate writers. The focus of the discussion, again, was on how to appropriately incorporate sources in research paper writing. I highlighted the sentences in the student's paper that were too similar to those in the original texts, and asked her to paraphrase if she decided not to use them as direct quotes with quotation marks. "But I did the paraphrase. I changed the sentence structures and only kept a couple of words!", said the student. It was not an unfamiliar reaction to me. In fact, it was quite expected. In the previous 14 tutorials, I had heard similar responses over and over again when I asked the students to work on their paraphrases. I smiled, ready to explain for the 15^{th} time the fussy notion of paraphrasing in English academic writing.

Having taught undergraduate ESL writing courses for several years, I now realize how common this scene is in all the tutorials that I have held. Despite the explicit instruction and numerous exercises provided in class about paraphrasing, I have found over the years that undergraduate ESL writers still seem rather confused about what they need to do to truly paraphrase and why they are expected to paraphrase in the first place. Frustrated and puzzled, I soon recognized that I am not alone in experiencing this problem; my writing-teacher colleagues are facing the same challenge in their teaching of

paraphrasing as well. For some mysterious reasons, the seemingly basic skill of "using one's own words to explain other people's ideas" causes tremendous difficulties to undergraduate ESL writers.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

As most university writing instructors would likely agree, paraphrasing serves as a fundamental skill crucial to students' academic survival in Anglophone universities. Despite the common conceptualization of paraphrasing as the simple act of changing the wording of source texts, it is indeed a complex literacy activity where academic writers need to interact with source texts in effective ways to achieve desirable rhetorical objectives in their writing (Yamada, 2003). While paraphrasing, writers need to consider what parts of the sources should be paraphrased, what rhetorical functions could be achieved through paraphrasing, and how to make connections between the paraphrased information and their ideas. In addition, given the academic writing context, writers also need to take into account the preferred language styles and conform to disciplinary writing conventions. Therefore, in order to produce successful paraphrases, academic writers need to attend to various reading and writing practices, actively engaging in "inferential thinking" (Yamada, 2003, p. 247) and decision making while doing so.

As new members of the academic community, ESL learners often experience a sense of insecurity when being asked to perform such complex literacy tasks. For them, the source texts that contain disciplinary terminology are challenging to comprehend, and the formal register of language demanding to grasp. As a result, ESL undergraduate students studying in Anglophone universities often produce unsatisfactory paraphrases

that either misrepresent the meaning of the original texts or exhibit a downgraded sophistication of language style (Campbell, 1990). In addition, coming from different rhetorical and cultural backgrounds, novice ESL writers new to the practice of paraphrasing may also find it difficult to understand the concept itself and why it is so commonly used in English academic writing as a way to incorporate source information, that is, why it is considered so important. These novice L2 (second language) writers often do not see the point of using their own words to explain somebody else's ideas. One common question that I repeatedly get from my students is: “If I am already citing someone, why do I need to change his words and not use direct quotes instead?”

Although recent research on textual appropriation has provided valuable insights about various issues regarding ESL writers' experiences with the incorporation of source texts for academic writing in postsecondary educational settings, insufficient attention is devoted to the investigation of the particular skill of paraphrasing and how novice ESL writers learn to engage in this new literacy practice while studying in Anglophone universities. So far, the notion of paraphrasing is still fluid and abstract, and writing teachers and researchers have not yet developed a consistent working definition that informs actual teaching and learning practices (Shirley, 2004). In fact, even experienced academic writers (e.g., university professors) disagree to a certain extent about what counts as appropriate paraphrasing (Roig, 2001).

Although the idea that “[a]ll language learning is to some extent a process of borrowing others’ words” (Pennycook, 1996, p. 227) has been widely accepted among writing practitioners nowadays, it is still unclear as to how much borrowing and what

types of borrowing are considered appropriate and effective in the academic context. Consequently, the evaluation of paraphrasing is often based on university instructors' intuitions and their own experiences as academic readers and writers. Moreover, since few studies have examined ESL undergraduate students' paraphrasing practices, little is known about how these novice L2 writers approach the task of paraphrasing, how they understand paraphrasing and what major challenges they encounter while paraphrasing. To fill in the gap and contribute to the current understanding of paraphrasing and source-based writing in general, this study examined undergraduate ESL students' experiences of learning to paraphrase in an advanced composition class at a major university in the U.S. By exploring how a group of international undergraduate students negotiated with the unfamiliar literacy practice of paraphrasing, I seek to shed light on the intricacy of novice L2 writers' paraphrasing behaviors as well as the complexities of learning to incorporate sources in English academic writing.

1.2 Objectives of the Study and Research Questions

Motivated by the essential roles that paraphrasing plays in English academic writing and the common struggles that L2 writers encounter in mastering the skill, this study explored how a group of International undergraduate students learned and practiced paraphrasing in an advanced ESL composition course at an American university. As Chandrasoma, Thompson and Pennycook (2004) propose, it is important to study learners' textual borrowing practices within social, cultural and local contexts where they are actually asked to perform such tasks. By investigating L2 writers' experiences of learning to paraphrase, the major difficulties they encountered in the process of

paraphrasing, their perceptions about when and why to paraphrase, and what counts as good paraphrasing, I aim to produce a contextualized understanding of the complexities involved for novice ESL writers to learn and utilize the linguistically, rhetorically and culturally challenging skill of paraphrasing. In line with this objective, the following research questions were formulated to guide data collection and analysis.

1. How are international undergraduate students socialized into the practice of paraphrasing in the ESL composition course?
   1.1 How is paraphrasing introduced and explained in lectures and textbooks?
   1.2 What exercises and assignments are given to students to practice paraphrasing?
   1.3 How does the instructor evaluate students' paraphrases? What types of feedback are provided for students about their paraphrases?
   1.4 How do the course instructor and coordinator conceptualize the teaching and learning of paraphrasing?
2. How do novice ESL writers understand the practice of paraphrasing in English academic writing?
   2.1 How do L2 writers understand textual appropriation in their native language writing?
   2.2 How do L2 writers understand the purposes of paraphrasing in English academic writing?
   2.3 How does L2 writers' previous literacy background in textual appropriation affect their understanding of paraphrasing in English academic writing?
   2.4 What criteria do L2 writers use to evaluate the quality of their own paraphrases?

3. What are the general practices of ESL undergraduate writers when they are asked to paraphrase a short paragraph taken from their readings?
   3.1 How do they start paraphrasing?
   3.2 What strategies and techniques do they use when working on a paraphrase?
   3.3 What decisions do they make in the paraphrasing processes (e.g. what to keep and what to substitute)?
   3.4 What major difficulties do they encounter throughout the process?
4. How do L2 undergraduate writers utilize paraphrasing in source-based writing assignments?
   4.1 What information do they choose to paraphrase in their own research paper?
   4.2 How do they make connections between the paraphrased information and their own arguments in the paper?
   4.3 What are their perceptions about the necessity and functions of paraphrasing in research paper writing?
   4.4 What challenges do they encounter while reading to paraphrase? What challenges do they encounter while writing up the paraphrases?

1.3 Significance of the Study

Current research on undergraduate ESL students' academic writing development mainly focuses on the different genres of tasks that this group of writers encounter in the Anglophone university context, with limited attention directed to the fundamental roles that the skill of paraphrasing plays in helping L2 writers accomplish these common tasks (which are often source-based). If these novice L2 writers do not acquire a sufficient

knowledge of paraphrasing and an adequate ability to paraphrase, they are likely to experience significant difficulties in coping with source-based writing tasks. In addition, L2 writers' inability to paraphrase may also result in an unjust accusation of plagiarism even if they have no intention to cheat (Abasi, Akbari & Graves, 2006; Howard, 1995). Therefore, it is critical for L2 writing researchers to study the practice of paraphrasing in order to develop a deeper understanding of novice ESL students' academic writing development. By exploring undergraduate L2 writers' paraphrasing practices in an advanced ESL academic writing course, this study can contribute to the literature on paraphrasing in the following three respects.

First of all, this study provides a detailed and in-depth account of undergraduate ESL writers' learning experiences of paraphrasing as well as their actual paraphrasing practices. The limited number of studies on paraphrasing has mostly focused on the final products of paraphrasing, comparing novice writers' paraphrases with original texts and evaluating the appropriateness of their paraphrasing practices. Beneficial as these studies are in describing the typical problems that students exhibit in their paraphrases, such research neglects the learning process of paraphrasing and fails to explain why certain problems occur in the first place. Although paraphrasing often functions as a threshold skill that enables writers to accomplish more demanding writing tasks, the challenging nature of the activity itself should not be overlooked by L2 writing researchers and practitioners. By examining ESL writers' paraphrasing experiences, their decision making processes, and their perceptions of the purposes of paraphrasing, this study contributes to our understanding of how novice L2 writers from different rhetorical and

cultural backgrounds negotiate to acquire this textual appropriation skill and utilize it in source-based writing tasks.

Second, this study increases our awareness of paraphrasing as a complex practice that requires an advanced level of reading and writing abilities. As Campbell (1990) explains, the process of integrating reading with writing "involves reading, understanding, learning, relating, planning, writing, revising, editing, and orchestrating" (p. 211). In the case of paraphrasing, to produce a quality paraphrase, novice L2 writers need to comprehend the original text, determine its core messages, and identify appropriate alternative ways to express the same meaning. If they are working on a larger assignment, such as a research paper, they will also need to decide what to paraphrase and how to link the paraphrases with their own arguments. It is thus crucial for researchers to examine students' decision making processes as they attempt to integrate source texts into their writing through paraphrasing (Campbell, 1990). Highlighting the inadequacy to characterize paraphrasing simply as "'regurgitation' and opposed to understanding" (Uemlianin, 2000, p. 348), this study provides a much needed focus on the kinds of reading and writing abilities novice L2 academic writers employ as they learn to paraphrase.

Third, this study presents methodological possibilities for second language writing researchers to study paraphrasing and source-based writing. Previous research on paraphrasing tends to rely on quantitative analysis to determine the frequency of different levels of textual appropriation in undergraduate writers' paraphrases (e.g. Keck, 2006; Shi, 2004). Few studies have employed qualitative research methods to examine

individual writers' actual paraphrasing experiences, that is, to see paraphrasing through the eyes of students. Drawing from the frameworks of language socialization and academic socialization, this study employed an qualitative research design to document how a group of international undergraduate students new to the practice of paraphrasing negotiated their learning of this particular literacy skill in a required ESL composition course. By applying think-aloud protocols, this research also elicited ESL novice writers' thinking as they engaged in paraphrasing tasks. Text-based interviews were used to obtain information about students' decision making in relation to paraphrasing as well as their perceptions of the roles that paraphrasing played in their research paper writing. In this sense, this study promotes a process-oriented qualitative perspective towards research on paraphrasing and highlights the importance for second language writing researchers to examine the lived experiences of ESL students as they engage in paraphrasing and source-based writing tasks.

1.4 Definition of Key Terms

In order to maximize the consistency of the proposed study, the following key terms are identified and defined.

Academic writing: In this study, academic writing is used as an umbrella term to refer to common types of writing that students are asked to practice in the U.S. university setting. As Casanave (2002) explains, while playing various "writing games" common in Anglophone academic discourse, students need to follow certain rhetorical conventions expected in the context of academia, but at the same time they are still able to assume agency in making decisions about "whether and how

to play" (p. xiv). Therefore, academic writing is not perceived as a static concept; rather, it is characterized by writers' constant negotiation with the established norms and expectations.

Academic socialization: Academic socialization research investigates novice academic members' socialization into the discourse of the target academic community (Morita & Kobayashi, 2008). For this study specifically, academic socialization refers to novice L2 academic writers' negotiation with the learning of the conventions and expectations associated with paraphrasing and source-based writing at the linguistic, rhetorical and cultural levels.

Source-based writing: Source-based writing is a commonly assigned type of writing task in Anglophone universities (Bridgeman & Carlson, 1984; Hale et al., 1996; Zhu, 2005). When completing such assignments, students are expected to interact with source texts and integrate relevant information into their writing. Examples of source-based writing assignments include summary, research paper, literature review, etc. Quoting, summarizing and paraphrasing are three major strategies used to incorporate source information into one's writing.

Paraphrasing: Campell (1998) defines paraphrasing as "Using different phrasing and wording (requiring citation) to express a particular passage that was originally written or spoken by someone else, in order to blend the other's idea smoothly into one's own writing" (p. 86). In a similar vein, Uemlianin (2000) defines paraphrasing as "the reproduction of the information content and structure of source text" (p. 349). In this project, paraphrasing refers to ESL writers' act of

using their own words to express ideas or information obtained from source texts. It is perceived as a complex reading and writing task that involves ESL writers' constant decision making about a variety of issues, such as when to paraphrase, what words to keep and substitute, what counts as appropriate paraphrasing, and what rhetorical purposes could be achieved by certain ways of paraphrasing. Instead of viewing paraphrasing as an objective and mechanic exercise, this research takes into account how L2 writers' subjective understanding of paraphrasing may affect their actual practices. This study also acknowledges that the standards used to regulate appropriate paraphrasing are not absolute, but depend on different writing contexts and the purposes of paraphrasing (Uemlianin, 2000).

Patchwriting: Howard (2001) defines patchwriting as a mixture of inappropriately documented source texts and students' original wording. Instead of perceiving patchwriting as a simple form of plagiarism, Howard (1995, 2001) proposes that it could be taken as a writing strategy that novice writers employ in exploring the new discourse in academia. Accordingly, patchwriting can be considered a type of written interlanguage essential in the trajectory of undergraduate ESL students' academic writing development.

Practice: In this dissertation, practice is used in both its noun and verb form. When used as a noun, practice refers to such social and cultural activities as paraphrasing and source-based writing. As Casanave (2002) points out, when engaging in academic writing tasks, novice writers have to make personal, social, and cultural

adjustments in their attempts to follow the often unstated norms and conventions attached to the tasks. Practice, in this sense, highlights the value-laden nature of academic writing tasks. When used in its verb form, practice refers to novice L2 writers' repeated engagement with reading and writing exercises and activities where they experiment with the various expectations that they are held up to in the academic context.

Developmental perspective: A developmental perspective is used in this study to capture the learning trajectory that novice L2 writers go through in acquiring the unfamiliar literacy practice of paraphrasing. This perspective is particularly important to textual appropriation research in that it views novice academic writers' inappropriate source use practices as an issue of their developing language and literacy proficiency instead of a moral or ethical problem (Hyland, 2001; Pecorari, 2008), thus shifting the focus of research from plagiarism onto learning and development. Specific to the study of paraphrasing, concepts such as "patchwriting" (Howard, 1995) and "attempted paraphrase" (Keck, 2006) have been proposed to acknowledge novice L2 writers' efforts in negotiating between their developing linguistic and academic knowledge, and the common expectations as related to paraphrasing.

The cultural dimension: In this study, paraphrasing is conceptualized as, first and foremost, a cultural activity that reflects Western views of intertextual relationships. When learning to paraphrase, ESL writers are essentially being socialized into a culturally specific way of interacting with sources. The cultural

dimension is used as an umbrella term to refer to the interplay of different levels of culture (Connor, 2011) in novice ESL writers' attempts to make sense of the culturally strange practice of paraphrasing.

The rhetorical dimension: The rhetorical dimension in this study refers to the rhetorical functions that can be achieved through the effective use of paraphrasing in source-based writing. When learning to paraphrase, novice ESL writers are expected to use paraphrasing strategically to achieve specific rhetorical purposes in the context of a larger writing assignment. Paraphrasing thus contributes to the overall rhetorical goal of source-based writing. The rhetorical dimension, therefore, focuses on how (or whether) ESL writers utilize paraphrasing to help achieve rhetorical goals in completing source-based writing assignments. It is important to point out here that the rhetorical functions associated with paraphrasing are in essence cultural, and the separation between the cultural and rhetorical dimensions is for the purpose of data analysis and presentation.

The linguistic dimension: The linguistic dimension in this study focuses on the linguistic decisions that novice ESL writers make when completing paraphrasing tasks, such as what words to keep in their paraphrases, what phrases to substitute, what strategies to use (e.g. synonym replacement, sentence structure change, etc.) in their paraphrases.

1.5 Assumptions of the Study

The methodological decisions which guided this study are based on the following basic assumptions.

1. The task of paraphrasing includes both reading and writing components.
2. Participants of the study are equipped with adequate language skills to complete questionnaires designed in English and to participate in think-aloud and text-based interviews in English.
3. Think-aloud protocols are valid in capturing participants' instant thinking processes.
4. Text-based interviews are effective in eliciting participants' retrospective thoughts about their previous paraphrasing practices.
5. The answers that participants provide for questionnaires and interviews truthfully reflect their thinking.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

Due to the qualitative nature of the research design, this study has some limitations that need to be addressed in future research. First of all, in order to produce an in-depth account of undergraduate ESL writers' paraphrasing experiences, the study included a relatively small number of participants, which inevitably limits the generalizability of the findings. In addition, since this study focused on a particular group of undergraduate L2 writers (students from China) and their paraphrasing experiences in one specific ESL composition course, caution is needed in attempting possible transfer of its findings and interpretations to other contexts.

Second, by using think-aloud protocol and text-based interview as data collection methods, this study relied on participants' oral reports of what they did during the paraphrasing processes and why they were making certain decisions. As a result, the credibility of the findings was largely determined by the level of truthfulness that

participants were willing to devote to the project. Also, for ESL writers who may not be completely fluent in oral English, thinking aloud and recalling in a second language are likely to present certain linguistic challenges that weaken the validity of the study. To minimize the negative effects caused by such linguistic constraints, I allowed participants to use their native language, Chinese, if they preferred to. For those students who chose to use English, I provided them with sufficient time to articulate their thoughts and ideas. Additionally, anxiety is another important factor that could undermine the validity of what participants articulate during think-aloud protocols and interviews. Lacking confidence in their writing, these ESL writers may have felt reluctant to discuss their unsatisfactory attempts at paraphrasing. To address this limitation, I tried to create a relaxing and comfortable environment where participants did not feel evaluated while expressing their thoughts.

A third limitation of the study has to do with the length of the data gathering phase, which was one academic quarter (i.e., about 10 weeks). Given the fundamental roles that paraphrasing plays throughout undergraduate ESL writers' school years, a quarter-long study was not sufficient to uncover the full scope of students' experiences with this demanding literacy skill and how paraphrasing is connected to different types of writing assignments in content courses. Since different disciplinary courses may have varied requirements regarding source-based writing and textual borrowing (Bridgeman & Carlson, 1983; Hyland, 1999; Rinnert & Kobayashi, 2005), a longitudinal study that documents L2 writers' paraphrasing experiences across the curriculum would have

generated a more comprehensive portrait of their engagement with this particular reading-writing practice.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Perspectives and Literature Review

Research on second language writing in recent years has shown an increasing interest in the close connections between reading and writing (Grabe, 2001). Instead of viewing writing as an independent composing process, L2 writing researchers and practitioners, particularly those who are involved in postsecondary academic contexts, have started to explore the interface between reading and writing, and how one skill contributes to the development of the other (Campbell, 1990; Carson, 1993, 2001; Leki & Carson, 1997). On the one hand, academic writing tasks often require extensive use of source information, which makes reading an integral part of writing; on the other hand, through their engagement in the actual writing processes, ESL writers accumulate first-hand knowledge about the creation of texts, which in turn facilitates their reading practices (Grabe, 2001; Hirvela, 2004). As Hirvela (2004) points out, "what we know about reading comes partly from writing, and what we know about writing comes partly from reading" (p. 2).

In Anglophone universities, reading-based writing tasks are commonly assigned (Bridgeman & Carlson, 1984; Hale et al., 1996; Zhu, 2005), and students are expected to work effectively with source texts for various assignments (Hyland, 1999; Rinnert &

Kobayashi, 2005; Zhu, 2005). Paraphrasing thus becomes one of the threshold skills that ESL students need to grasp in order to cope with such challenging writing tasks as summary, critical review, and research paper (Campbell, 1990; Johns & Mayes, 1990; Keck, 2006). Despite the fundamental roles that paraphrasing plays in English academic writing, research on second language writing has devoted little attention to the teaching and learning of this particular textual appropriation skill. To fill in the gap, this study examined a group of international undergraduate students' paraphrasing experiences in an advanced ESL composition course, focusing on how novice L2 writers learned to paraphrase and negotiated with this unfamiliar literacy task throughout their learning. To contextualize the current study, I will review relevant theoretical perspectives that informed the design of the study as well as extant literature that has looked into ESL writers' textual appropriation practices.

2.1 Academic Socialization

Examining the lived experiences of a group of international undergraduate students' paraphrasing experiences in an advanced ESL composition course, this study drew from the theoretical perspectives of academic socialization and language socialization. It is important to point out here that this study is not, strictly speaking, language socialization research, given the principal research questions guiding the study and the methodological choices that I made regarding data collection and analysis. However, the design of this study was heavily influenced by the theoretical framework of language socialization, in particular its emphasis on the examination of participants' lived experiences in naturalistic settings as well as the interplay between individual agency and

the broader social and cultural contexts. Specific to this study, I was interested in investigating the actual learning experiences of novice L2 academic writers as related to paraphrasing and how they, as individual writers, negotiated with the norms and conventions associated with the practice. In this regard, the theoretical insights of language socialization research were crucial in helping me make methodological decisions for this study. Because of this, I will include a brief introduction to the framework of language socialization in this section within the review of academic socialization research, which is central to the current study.

Academic socialization in higher education (particularly in Anglophone universities) has been an emerging area that both first and second language researchers have looked into (Morita & Kobayashi, 2008). Given the unique discourse conventions expected in the English academic context, both native speakers of English and international students need to acquire academic discourses as "a second language" (Casanave, 1992, p. 159), although ESL learners may encounter greater challenges at the linguistic and cultural levels. Researchers have thus started to investigate the complexities of socialization in university settings, seeking to unveil the continuous and sometimes conflicting processes that novice members of the academy go through as they attempt to participate in academic conversations (Morita & Kobayashi, 2008). Acknowledging the unique discourse conventions prevalent in the academic context, academic socialization research has examined how undergraduate and graduate students are socialized into the target academic communities, generating valuable insights into the dynamics of academic enculturation.

It is worth noting here that within the area of academic socialization, researchers differ in terms of the focuses of their research as well as the methodological decisions that they make. As Morrita and Kobayashi (2008) have explained in their review article, there are three major orientations of research within the body of literature on academic socialization. The first orientation of research focuses on the investigation of "the academic and linguistic knowledge and skills" (Morrita and Kobayashi, 2008, p. 243) that are critical to L2 students' academic success. According to the authors, studies along this direction often employ such research methods as surveys and genre analysis to reveal the academic requirements that instructors have for students and the expectations associated with common academic genres. The second direction examines the process of how L2 students are socialized into the target academic communities, and this orientation of research commonly utilizes an qualitative design to capture the experiences of L2 learners (Morrita and Kobayashi, 2008). The third orientation features a critical perspective, seeking to demystify the power relations involved in the process of academic socialization (Morrita and Kobayashi, 2008). As can be seen in this classification, the second orientation of academic socialization research shares important theoretical and methodological features with language socialization, whereas the first and third categories are relatively farther away from the framework of language socialization. The current study takes the second orientation and aims to examine the process of L2 students' academic socialization experiences.

2.1.1 Language socialization framework.

Language acquisition research in the last several decades has witnessed a major paradigmatic shift from a predominant cognitive perspective that conceptualizes language learning mainly as individual learners' acquisition of linguistic forms to a sociocultural approach that emphasizes language use in contexts and explores the social and cultural meanings embedded in varied linguistic systems. Critiquing the traditional cognitive approach that tends to perceive language acquisition as occurring in a vacuum, sociocultural researchers have promoted a variety of theoretical frameworks that advocate for a reconceptualization of language learning as inseparable from the environment where the learning takes place. Of these major frameworks, the language socialization (LS) perspective is one that has drawn the attention of a growing number of researchers in recent years. Originally formulated in the 1980s on the basis of interdisciplinary insights (Garrett, 2008), the LS approach has developed into a key research paradigm that enables researchers to investigate the dynamic relationship between language acquisition and socialization. Examining "socialization through language and socialization to use language" (Ochs, 1986, p. 2), LS paradigm has proven "coherent and flexible enough" (Garrett & Baquedano-Lopez, 2002, p. 339) to study novice members' speech behaviors in relation to how individual speakers' development is intertwined with social meaning construction in different language contexts (Garrett, 2008).

One important theoretical underpinning of the LS paradigm is its recognition of the inseparable relationship between linguistic development and socialization, and between individual agency of language learners and the broader sociocultural contexts

(Garrett, 2008; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). Drawing from insights generated in a variety of disciplines, including psychology, anthropology and sociology, the LS paradigm conceptualizes language as a primary medium through which novice members of a community gradually acquire the socially adequate and culturally appropriate norms needed for them to successfully function as full members of a society (Garrett, 2008). As Garrett and Baquedano-Lopez (2002) explain, it is through language that "cultural knowledge is communicated and instantiated, negotiated and contested, reproduced and transformed" (p. 339). Therefore, the LS paradigm combines the strengths of language acquisition research and socialization studies, bridging the gap between the linguistic and social aspects of language learning (Garrett, 2008).

While investigating the powerful influence of the broad sociocultural contexts on language learning, LS researchers also emphasize the active roles of novice members, who constantly shape, challenge or reject the target norms that they are expected to be socialized into (Garrett & Baquedano-Lopez, 2002). Acknowledging the "mutually constitutive nature" (Garrett & Baquedano-Lopez, 2002, p. 344) of the interplay between the broad social contexts and individual agency, LS researchers seek to unveil the dynamic and complex interactions between language learners and their target learning contexts. Accordingly, the concept of agency and how it manifests in language socialization have been a major area of research for LS researchers.

In terms of methodological choices, LS researchers often employ a qualitative longitudinal design in order to document the ongoing processes where novice participants interact with experts, aiming to generate "thick record[s]" (Bronson & Watson-Gegeo,

2008, p. 52) of novice language users' socialization experiences. LS researchers rely on naturalistic communication as primary data for analysis. By recording authentic interactions between novice participants and more experienced members of a community, LS researchers investigate how socialization takes place through language and how novice members are socialized into the norms and conventions guiding appropriate language uses (Ochs, 1986). The emphasis of the LS paradigm on the connections between the micro and the macro thus enables researchers to study specific language phenomena in the context of social meaning construction, yielding insights into how language and socialization are intertwined with each other.

According to LS researchers, language socialization is an ongoing process (Zuengler & Cole, 2005), as participants constantly move across diverse social and cultural situations and participate in community-specific activities that hold different expectations regarding appropriate language use. As Atkinson (2003) puts it, "learning/socialization does not stop at some determinate endpoint, but rather continues across the lifespan" (p. 161). Although early LS research mainly focused on children's first language development and their interactions with caregivers, as shown in Schieffelin and Ochs's edited book (1986), its scope has expanded in recent years to include a variety of multilingual contexts where novice participants engage in different types of socialization processes at different stages of life (Duff & Hornberger, 2008).

2.1.2 Current research on academic socialization.

Among the various topics explored by academic socialization researchers, academic literacy socialization has been a major area of investigation, given the primary

role that reading and writing play in the higher education context. Because of the heavy demands of reading and writing in Anglophone universities, researchers interested in looking into academic socialization have focused on how students acquire the much needed literacy skills expected in the academic context. As novice members of the academy, undergraduate and graduate students, both native speakers of English and ESL learners, encounter difficulties as they attempt to follow the unfamiliar literacy conventions in the university setting.

McCarthy (1987) uses the metaphor "strange lands" (p. 233) to describe academic discourse in the eyes of a native-English-speaking college student. The participant of McCarthy's (1987) longitudinal study, Dave, who is considered a typical American college student, felt intimidated and overwhelmed by the academic writing conventions required in different courses. As a native American who had lived his life in the United States and was quite familiar with the higher education system in the country, Dave still perceived the academic community, which he was expected to enter, as "a strange land" (McCarthy, 1987). Apart from learning the general literacy conventions in the higher education setting, novice members of the academy also need to constantly negotiate with the specific departmental culture. In this vein, Casanave (1992) examined the academic socialization of a Hispanic doctoral student, Virginia, in her first year of graduate study in sociology at an American university. The findings of the study showed that the participant experienced major difficulties in resolving the conflicts between the common practices in the target disciplinary community and her own conceptualization of sociology. According to the researcher, Virginia's discomfort with the dominant

theoretical orientations in the department and the scientific language and ways of knowing made her feel alienated from the Hispanic communities that she had planned to work with, and eventually led her to quit the program. Based on Virginia's case, Casanave (1992) highlights the importance for academic disciplines to incorporate cultural diversity into the socialization processes in order to help minority students to connect their distinctive backgrounds and interests with the disciplinary expectations.

Although it is undeniable that academic discourse is a new language to all novice participants of the academy, as the literacy conventions developed out of the "institutional cultural history" (Watson-Gegeo & Nielsen, 2003, p. 159) are not native to any social groups, ESL students experience greater challenges while being socialized into academic discourse given their developing competence in English, the medium through which academic socialization occurs. For international students pursuing studies in Anglophone universities, the "strange land" metaphor (McCarthy, 1987) becomes a physical reality, as they are indeed living and studying in an unfamiliar environment. Not only are these ESL students new to the potentially intimidating academic writing conventions that are demanding for all novice members, but they also have little knowledge about the social and cultural contexts where academic discourse circulates and the underlying assumptions associated with such discourse.

Academic socialization researchers have thus investigated the developmental trajectories that ESL learners often go through as they negotiate the learning of academic discourse in the university context. Spack (1997), for instance, explored the literacy strategies used by one ESL student, Yuko, as she attempted to acquire the academic

writing conventions in English. Analysis of data collected through classroom observations, interviews and course-related documents over three years showed that Yuko actively utilized her L1 (native language) literacy experiences to cope with the reading/writing tasks in the Anglophone university, and her ability to conform to the target academic expectations improved over time. Although in the beginning Yuko found it difficult to engage in critical analysis and develop her own arguments, as was expected by her professors, she gradually grasped the literacy strategies needed to successfully meet the course requirements. Throughout the socialization processes, Yuko was generally receptive toward the norms and conventions that she observed in the English academic context, although she did challenge them sometimes by expressing her dissatisfaction with the lack of subtlety in English writing. Based on Yuko's case, Spack (1997) concludes that "[s]uccess can be measured not by whether students adopt particular discourse practices but rather by how productively they can negotiate their way through diverse discourses" (p. 51), highlighting the importance of conducting longitudinal research to capture a fuller picture of L2 academic socialization as learners negotiate conflicting discourse conventions.

Also investigating the potential difficulties that ESL undergraduate students encounter in academic socialization, Atkinson & Ramanathan (1995) conducted a 10-month qualitative study to investigate the alignment (or lack of alignment) in the conceptualization of writing instruction between L1 and L2 composition programs. The findings revealed that the two programs were "in fact the products of two distinct cultures---with their own oft-contrasting norms of what academic writing is, what

constitutes good academic writing, and how the latter can best be communicated in the classroom" (p. 540). For example, the L1 writing program perceived the formulaic five-paragraph essays as limiting students' voices, whereas the L2 composition program advocated for the practicality of such an organizational approach in the learning of academic writing. Although the two different writing programs both helped to expose ESL students to the diverse expectations of academic discourse in Anglophone universities, these major inconsistencies and disjunctions caused increasing difficulties for ESL students who had to make the transition between the two programs (Atkinson & Ramanathan, 1995). The researchers also pointed out that the heavily emphasized skills (e.g., critical thinking) in American universities represented a culturally specific conceptualization of academic discourse, which was new to most ESL students from other cultural backgrounds. Atkinson and Ramanathan (1995) thus questioned the legitimacy of using such standards to evaluate and assess ESL writers.

In a similar vein, Leki (2007) followed a group of ESL undergraduate students for several years during their college studies, documenting the challenges that they experienced as they tackled various academic writing assignments in different courses. The findings of her study also highlighted the mismatch between the relatively narrow focuses of ESL composition courses and the discipline-specific requirements in content classes. Research along this line has thus unveiled the complexities of second language learners' experiences as they negotiate with the socialization processes in Anglophone universities.

Drawing from the insights of the LS paradigm, academic socialization researchers have problematized and re-conceptualized the notion of academic discourse, which was once perceived as a fixed set of rules and conventions guiding academic writing. By utilizing an qualitative longitudinal research design to document the complexities and dynamics involved as novice members participate in oral and written activities in the academic setting, researchers have critiqued the reductionist views of academic discourse as static and decontextualized (Duff, 2007; Prior, 1998; Street, 1996; Zamel, 1998). Various researchers have explored the different expectations that undergraduate and graduate students are held up to in different courses, highlighting the multiplicity of the seemingly unified notion of academic discourse. As Farr (1993) aptly explains, "literacy…is a social practice that varies according to the particular use to which it is put in each context. Likewise, the cognitive demands of writing and the cognitive effects of being literate also vary according to particular uses" (p. 11). Therefore, an overemphasis on the surface features of academic writing (i.e., the direct style and objective stance) may actually prevent researchers and writing instructors from noticing students' active roles in negotiating with the unfamiliar concept of academic discourse within certain social contexts. For instance, a piece of writing that "closely approximates the ideal of systematic, impersonal, 'academic' discourse" (Spellmeyer, 1989, p. 271) may in fact reveal the writer's lack of ability (or perhaps unwillingness and discomfort) to enter academic conversations by finding his/her own voice.

Along this line, academic socialization researchers in recent years have shifted the focus of research from the linguistic output of novice members to the multifaceted

contexts where learners negotiate with the interplay between the general writing conventions in English, disciplinary expectations, individual instructors' preferences, and their own conceptualizations of academic discourse. Accordingly, academic socialization researchers have underscored the participatory and interactive nature of reading, writing and speaking practices in universities, emphasizing the situatedness of academic discourse and how the discursive environment continuously shapes and redefines academic discourse conventions (Flowerdew, 2000; Li & Casanave, 2005; Morita, 2009; Morita & Kobayashi, 2008; Prior, 1998; Zamel, 1997). Studies in this direction have thus demonstrated that "there is no context-free language learning, and all communicative contexts involve social, cultural, and political dimensions affecting which linguistic forms are available or taught and how they are represented" (Watson-Gegeo & Nielsen, 2003, p. 157), contributing to a more sophisticated understanding of the socially constructed nature of academic discourse and how novice writers' unsatisfactory academic performances are not necessarily a result of their lack of abilities, but their struggles between varied expectations in different contexts.

Apart from acknowledging the critical role of contexts in shaping the notion of academic discourse, researchers have also investigated the cultural aspect of academic socialization. As Garrett and Baquedano-Lopez (2002) point out, "[l]iteracy practices are…inherently social, reflecting the cultural knowledge and expectations that participants bring to bear on the literacy event" (p. 351). With an increasing number of international students from diverse cultural backgrounds pursuing undergraduate and graduate studies in Anglophone universities, academic discourse socialization has

become essentially intercultural, where novice learners need to constantly negotiate with the culturally specific conceptualizations of appropriate and convincing discourse. Examining how Mexican immigrants construct persuasive oral performances, Farr (1993) pointed out that "what is considered persuasive---and *how* and *in what contexts* the persuasion is displayed---can vary dramatically from one cultural tradition to another" (p. 32). Therefore, the "essayist approach" (Farr, 1993) prevailing in the American academic context should not be taken for granted by researchers and university instructors as the universal way of logical reasoning and clear writing. As Farr (1993) demonstrates based on her qualitative research, "[a] text that may appear 'illogical' through the lenses of essayist literacy may be quite logical when looked at through other lenses" (p. 32). In a similar vein, Street (1996) also argues that the "general expectations of abstraction, structure, analysis" (p. 105), which are often considered key features that characterize English academic discourse, do not capture the subtlety and dynamics of academic conversations that include participants from diverse social and cultural backgrounds.

For second language learners from different cultural origins, academic socialization inevitably involves various dimensions of cultural exchanges, including participants' ethnic origins, the culture(s) of the local community, the academic culture(s), and disciplinary culture(s) (Atkinson, 1999; Flowerdew & Miller, 1995). As Casanave (1992) contends, "minority and foreign students face the possibility of being confronted with a disciplinary language and culture so distant from their own that to join such a culture would mean alienating themselves from other highly valued personal and occupational communities at home" (p. 174). In other words, the development of

academic socialization involves more than just finding “a kind of technicist solution to problems” (Street, 1996, p. 106). In this regard, an LS perspective that emphasizes the cultural dimension of language learning enables researchers to examine the phenomenon of transculturaion, which “assumes and celebrates the selective, generative, and inventive nature of linguistic and cultural adaptation and thus reflects precisely how languages and cultures develop and change-infused, invigorated, and challenged by variation and innovation” (Zamel, 1997, p. 350), as an integral part of the socialization processes. Although the cultural aspect of language learning has been examined by researchers from different theoretical backgrounds, the LS paradigm, which highlights the importance of naturalistic inquiry and an emic perspective, enables academic socialization researchers to generate “nuanced delineations” (Li & Casanave, 2005, p. 8) to capture the subtlety of academic enculturation instead of only examining the “broad strokes” (Li & Casanave, 2005, p. 8) that represent a rather simplistic view of cultural interactions.

Following the emphasis of the LS paradigm on the importance of researching the processes of socialization, academic socialization researchers have started to look into the ongoing interactions between novice members of the academy and the variety of tasks expected in the target context. Early academic discourse studies, i.e., genre-based and needs analysis research, often focus on the end, or written products, seeking to identify the major types of tasks commonly assigned in Anglophone universities and the general rhetorical conventions related to the different tasks (e.g., Horowitz, 1986). Although this strand of inquiry provides valuable information about the authentic tasks that students are expected to perform, it overlooks the complexities and dynamics of academic

socialization, and directs insufficient attention to the processes through which new members negotiate with the diverse expectations. As Bartholomae (1986) points out, students new to the academy "have to invent the university by assembling and mimicking its language, finding some compromise between idiosyncrasy, a personal history, and the requirements of convention, the history of a discipline" (p. 4), the experiences of which are much more complex than the acquisition of a set of linguistic norms and conventions.

Therefore, to generate a fuller picture of students' academic socialization experiences, researchers need to employ a developmental perspective and "question the assumption of a presumed end point of language socialization" (Zuengler & Cole, 2005, p. 314), given the ongoing nature of language learning and enculturation. The LS paradigm, in this regard, enables academic socialization researchers to examine in detail various complex enculturation processes, which often "involve struggles over access to resources, conflicts and negotiations between differing viewpoints arising from differing degrees of experience and expertise, and transformations of a given academic community's practices as well as of the participants' identities" (Morita, 2004, p. 577). Emphasizing a developmental perspective in novice members' socialization experiences, the LS paradigm has provided academic socialization researchers with a new lens to capture the trials and attempts of students who struggle to find their way into the unfamiliar, if not intimidating, academic discourse community.

Another major insight that academic socialization researchers have drawn from the LS paradigm related to the developmental perspective has to do with the emphasis on agency, and how all members of the academic community, novice and experienced alike,

constantly shape and reshape the discourse conventions through socialization. Although early academic literacy research tends to assume academic socialization as a unidirectional process, where novice members appropriate conventions established by experienced members of the academy (Coles & Wall, 1987; Morita, 2004; Zamel, 1998), recent academic socialization studies have highlighted the bilateral relationship between novice members and the target academic community. Leki's (2006) study, for example, demonstrated that contrary to the stereotypical descriptions of ESL learners as passive recipients of the norms and conventions in the American-university setting, the participants actively challenged the authoritative position of their course professors to various degrees. In other words, while learning about the prevalent conventions that circulate in the academy, new members also actively shape the expectations of the target community throughout the ongoing processes of academic socialization.

2.2 Novice Academic Writers' Textual Appropriation Practices

In this section, I will review literature about novice academic writers' textual appropriation practices to contextualize the current study. First, I will discuss a major strand of research that investigates ESL writers' inappropriate textual appropriation practices, focusing on the issue of plagiarism. Then I will present the latest perspectives about novice L2 writers' textual appropriation behavior, addressing both the developmental and cultural perspectives. In the end, I will briefly discuss how the present study contributes to the limited literature of paraphrasing.

2.2.1 Plagiarism.

One important strand of research related to second language writers' textual appropriation practices investigates the phenomenon of plagiarism; that is, the use of others' ideas or words without proper acknowledgement of their contribution. Various researchers have explored the fluidity of the notion of plagiarism and how the knowledge of paraphrasing is crucial for academic writers to avoid being accused of this serious form of academic misconduct (Barry, 2006; Campbell, 1990; Currie, 1998; Pecorari, 2003; Pennycook, 1996; Roig, 1997; Scollon, 1995; Walker, 2008). Studies have shown that disagreements still exist among ESL composition practitioners and experienced academic writers across disciplines as to what counts as plagiarized writing and the criteria used to define acceptable textual borrowing (Bloch, 2001; Keck, 2006). Terms such as "exact/near copy" (Campbell, 1990), "closely/total paraphrase" (Shi, 2004), and "attempted paraphrase" (Keck, 2006) have been coined by different researchers to define the degree of textual borrowing that occurs in students' writing. In fact, writing instructors and professors of different disciplines may establish different standards in determining the legitimacy of a paraphrase, which adds to ESL writers' uncertainty about what counts as appropriate paraphrasing (Keck, 2006). As Sowden (2005) argues, in a strict sense all writers plagiarize, since new ideas are often inspired by or based on previous authors' thinking. Accordingly, "the distinction between intertextuality and plagiarism is a very fine line" (Hyland, 2001, p. 375).

Recognizing the confusion embedded in the concept of plagiarism and the often intimidating effect it has on novice ESL writers, recent researchers examining learners'

source use practices have pointed out that plagiarism, which denotes a sense of intentional cheating, does not capture the multifaceted reasons for second language writers' inappropriate textual appropriation practices. ESL writers, who are new to the academic context, often feel confused about the Western conventions of textual borrowing and unsure about the types of practices that will lead them to be accused of plagiarism (Shi, 2006; Valentine, 2006). Roig (1997), for example, examined undergraduate students' understanding of plagiarism and correct paraphrasing. Results of the study showed that more than half of the participants were unable to distinguish between plagiarized and appropriately paraphrased versions, indicating a general confusion about plagiarism among second language writers. Based on the findings, Roig (1997) maintains that undergraduate writers' insensitivity to the notion of plagiarism and their lack of knowledge about appropriate paraphrasing may lead to "inadvertent plagiarism" (p. 119). Abundant interview data has also revealed that ESL students accused of plagiarism because of their violation of the rules guiding accepted textual borrowing sometimes do not exhibit any intention to cheat. Abasi, Akbari and Graves's (2006) study, for example, showed that some ESL learners explicitly acknowledged the sources by pointing out the authors' names while inappropriately taking large chunks of texts from the original materials and inserting them into their own writing.

In addition, the varied nature of different writing tasks may influence undergraduate writers' textual appropriation behaviors. Investigating how American and Chinese college students practiced paraphrasing while completing a summary and a personal opinion task, respectively, Shi (2004) discovered that both groups of students

relied more on the original wording of the text when working on the summary assignment; nevertheless, L2 writers exhibited a higher degree of insensitivity to the inclusion of words and phrases from the source text. Also comparing NES (native English speaking) and NNES (nonnative English speaking) undergraduate writers' textual borrowing practices for the completion of a summary task, Keck (2006) found out that although both groups utilized paraphrasing as an important tool to cope with the summary assignment, L2 writers' paraphrases contained more exact strings of words from the original sources compared with their L1 counterparts. Based on her findings, Keck (2006) cautions ESL writing instructors against equaling inappropriate paraphrasing with plagiarism, arguing that a heightened awareness of L2 writers' perceptions of paraphrasing and plagiarism is critical for teachers to understand the reasons behind their unsatisfactory paraphrasing practices.

Yet another factor that may also explain inappropriate textual appropriation in ESL students' writing has to do with learners' assumptions of audience and its familiarity with their chosen sources. As Campbell (1990) displays through her study, the possible reason why her participants infrequently referenced the single source text used for the task was that they knew that their audience, the composition instructor, was familiar with the source and would have no problem identifying any information taken from it. In other words, the learners simply did not feel the need to document the source since they knew that their teacher shared the same background knowledge.

These studies have all demonstrated that the moment we put an equal sign between ESL writers' inappropriate textual borrowing and plagiarism, we are inevitably

blurring the boundary between inadequate knowledge and unethical behavior, which prevents us from fully understanding the complexities of learning to use sources for academic writing in a second language (Abasi, Akbari & Graves, 2006). As Chandrasoma, Thompson and Pennycook (2004) acutely point out, “the concept ‘plagiarism’…by and large obfuscates more than it clarifies” (p. 172).

2.2.2 The developmental perspective.

As is advocated by a growing number of second language writing researchers, for novice writers who are exploring the unfamiliar writing conventions in the English academic context, inappropriate textual appropriation needs to be perceived as an issue of literacy development rather than a moral problem (Hyland, 2001; Leki & Carson, 1997; Pecorari, 2008; Valentine, 2006). From this perspective, students can only do what they are developmentally equipped to do at a certain point in time. They move along a developmental trajectory as their knowledge and ability increase, and not necessarily in a strictly linear sense (from beginning to middle to end). Rather, this movement might be recursive rather than linear as they grapple with the complexity of L2 source text use. The developmental perspective thus argues that students’ inadequate attempts at paraphrasing need to be seen in this light. Sometimes, even though novice academic writers are aware of the importance of documenting sources appropriately in order to avoid being accused of plagiarism, they may still encounter major challenges when trying to produce legitimate paraphrases (Liao & Tseng, 2010).

Acknowledging the complexity of textual borrowing in general and paraphrasing in particular, the new direction of research that deconstructs the notion of plagiarism has

prompted more second language researchers to investigate the underlying reasons behind international students' inappropriate textual borrowing practices. More and more researchers assert that a learning (i.e., developmental) perspective needs to be adopted in order to develop a thorough understanding of the developmental trajectories of second language writers and to better explain their exploratory textual borrowing behaviors (Abasi & Akbari, 2008; Ouellette, 2008). Chandrasoma, Thompson and Pennycook (2004) proposed the concept of "transgressive intertextuality" to replace the term plagiarism in order to shift the emphasis of research onto learners' active interaction and negotiation with texts. While writing from sources, students need to engage in a variety of complex reading and writing activities and make contextualized decisions as they interact with the reading materials and writing tasks (Kucer, 1985; McGinley, 1992; Spivey, 1990).

Although textual appropriation is often considered a writing practice, reading in fact plays an key role in determining writers' ability to effectively incorporate sources (e.g., Winograd, 1984). Reading is itself a highly complex activity that "involves active negotiation between reader and text" (Zamel, 1992, p. 479). What each reader sees in the same text could be different due to his or her past literacy experiences, the present writing context, and the discursive connections he or she makes between the two. In other words, "understanding means not so much taking away from a text as giving to the text what is not there" (Zamel, 1992, p. 471). As Greene (1992) points out, in order to effectively make connections between reading and writing, students need to develop the ability of "mining texts": to critically examine the information presented in the readings and the

writing strategies employed by the authors, and actively search for useful materials that can be incorporated into their own writing. In the academic setting, students are often required to read texts that contain terms specific to various disciplines, and their unfamiliarity with the subject matter adds to the already demanding task of reading. Therefore, to articulate the meaning of source texts, writers need to develop an advanced level of reading proficiency (Kennedy, 1985; Kirkland & Sanders, 1991), an ability that is often not yet mastered by second language learners as they first enter Anglophone universities and are asked or expected to paraphrase.

Even if ESL writers achieve the competence necessary to fully comprehend source texts, their limited linguistic repertoire can cause additional difficulties as they try to incorporate source information into their writing (Allen, 2004; Petric, 2007). Studies have shown that ESL students who have taken basic composition courses are aware of the general rules guiding appropriate textual borrowing, but they sometimes just lack the cognitive and linguistic resources required to produce satisfactory paraphrases (Roig, 1999). In fact, some students choose to take large chunks of texts from sources simply because they feel that “there was no other alternative” (Chandrasoma, Thompson & Pennycook, 2004, p. 187) to express the same meaning. Novice ESL learners who are unfamiliar with the conventions in English academic writing may even find it hard to believe that their teachers are indeed asking for paraphrases written “in their own limited English” (Sherman, 1992, p. 194) instead of the neatly formed sentences from the original texts. In addition, certain writing assignments are sometimes beyond ESL learners’ linguistic capabilities (Abasi & Akbari, 2008; Hull & Rose, 1989). In such

situations, second language writers will naturally turn to the texts that they are reading for assistance, borrowing words, phrases, and sentence structures to facilitate the articulation of their ideas. As language learners, these texts are valuable sources of linguistic and rhetorical input for them in ways that they are not for native English speaking students. Eager to expand their target language vocabulary and knowledge of grammatical and rhetorical structures, and understanding that language learning is often about imitating how others write and speak the target language, there may be a natural temptation for these L2 writers to add what they read in the sources to their own repertoire of writing resources. The source texts thus become handy in helping the novice academic writers to complete the demanding assignments and meet the deadlines.

Acknowledging ESL learners' developing English proficiency, Howard (1995) proposes the term "patchwriting" as a way to acknowledge novice writers' efforts in trying to integrate sources into their own writing. Patchwriting, which refers to students' act of "blending his or her prose with unattributed phrases and sentences from a source" (Howard, 2001, para. 3), could be a result of students' inadequate reading comprehension or their inability to find alternative ways to express the same meanings in written forms. This "patching" of their words with original source text words is a way in which they negotiate the gap between what they know and what they are expected to do in paraphrasing. Therefore, rather than viewing patchwriting as a type of inappropriate textual borrowing practices, writing instructors need to consider the developmental trajectory of ESL learners as they explore new literacy practices in the Anglophone

university context (Howard, 1995, 2001). As Pecorari (2003) argues, “today’s patchwriter is tomorrow’s competent academic writer’’ (p. 338).

Studies along this line have all emphasized that learning to appropriately integrate source information in one’s own writing is a developmental process (Angelil-Carter, 2000; Campbell, 1990; Currie, 1998; Howard, 1999), and learners’ inappropriate textual borrowing practices may well be signals that indicate their conscious attempts in exploring academic writing conventions and demonstrating their developing knowledge (Hull & Rose, 1989). Some researchers have even argued that for ESL writers who do not have much knowledge about the writing conventions of the academy, copying texts produced by experienced writers actually helps them to develop a clearer idea of the expected writing style and language use (Abasi & Akbari, 2008; Pennycook, 1996; Sowden, 2005), as the act of copying imprints in their minds the words and patterns they read. This approach could be seen as the first step or stage on a developmental trajectory for the acquisition of paraphrasing ability.

For advanced academic writers, accurately representing source information in one’s own words is only the first step to the production of effective paraphrases. What they also need to take into consideration is how to achieve varied rhetorical purposes through the different ways to paraphrase source information (Swales, 1986, 1990). Petric (2007) conducted a corpus-based study to investigate the use of sources in high and low-level master theses and categorized different rhetorical functions achieved by citations. Results demonstrated that authors of high-rated theses used sources to fulfill a variety of rhetorical purposes, including establishing the background of research, problematizing

current literature, and evaluating the merits of previous studies, whereas writers that received lower grades incorporated source texts in a rather limited way, most often pointing out the origins of cited information only (Petric, 2007). In fact, both the ways in which the original authors are represented in citation and the choice of reporting verbs could signal writers' evaluations of the cited information and their own stances towards the topics under discussion (Moore, 1997; Scollon, 1994; Swales & Feak, 1994). Therefore, apart from simply acknowledging the sources of information, effective textual borrowing also serves to display academic writers' knowledge of certain topics and facilitate them with their own argument construction, which in turn helps writers to establish a legitimate authorial voice in the academic context (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1993; Petric, 2007).

Novice ESL writers, however, may rely too much on the use of source information and find it difficult to express their own thinking (Allen, 2004). Then, too, the notion of using "one's own words" can present a challenge to them. This often used phrase in paraphrasing instruction, in which students are told to "use their own words" to replace those used by the source text author, assumes that ESL writers already possess a sense of ownership over the L2 words they are using and can thus simply plug these words into their paraphrases. In reality, novice writers in academic English writing courses are generally still very much in the process of learning the target language, in which case they may be far from establishing a sense of ownership of the language. Hence, a phrase like "use your own words" may have little meaning for them, especially since they may think of the words they know in their native language as "their own

words.” As such, they are ill-equipped to obey this command while paraphrasing. Accordingly, it is important to raise students’ awareness of how various textual borrowing strategies enable them to actively participate in the academic dialogues and construct knowledge through writing (Angelil-Carter, 2000).

What adds to the challenges that novice L2 writers experience regarding textual appropriation is the fluidity and vagueness of the criteria used to evaluate the appropriateness of textual borrowing practices. Even experienced academic writers may disagree with each other about what constitutes appropriate paraphrasing and to what extent the wording of the source texts needs to be changed in order for a paraphrase to be considered legitimate. Shi (2012) investigated how university professors and students evaluated sample students' paraphrases by interviewing 48 students and 27 instructors. The findings of her study suggest that disciplinary differences exist in terms of what constitutes appropriate paraphrasing. Also, a comparison of the paraphrases produced by an experienced writer and a student points to the role that content knowledge plays in producing effective paraphrases. As Shi (2012) maintains, paraphrasing is not just about making linguistic changes; rather, inferential thinking based on sufficient content knowledge is critical for restating source text information. Shi (2012) thus emphasizes the need to "adopt an exploratory approach to negotiate the completing perspectives and practices" (p. 145) instead of making sweeping generalizations about the conventions associated with textual borrowing practices across the disciplines.

A recent strand of research that reflects the developmental perspective in exploring novice L2 writers' source use focuses on the experiences of relatively

successful writers. Instead of examining the problematic aspects of ESL students' textual appropriation behaviors, this strand of research investigates how successful L2 writers negotiate with the target conventions associated with source use and the motivations behind their practices. Three studies discussed in Harwood and Petric (2012), Petric and Harwood (2013), and Petric (2012) fall into this category.

Harwood and Petric (2012) investigated the source use practices of two L2 postgraduate students, Sofie and Tara. The findings of the study point out that the two participants, who were both successful students, utilized citations to create a favorable impression on their instructors. Both students chose to cite sources that they believed their instructor expected them to include in their papers, and inflated their reference lists to project the image of avid readers and diligent students. Although Harwood and Petric (2012) acknowledged the necessity for novice L2 writers to perform according to the expectations of the academic context that they are in, the researchers expressed their concerns about students like Sofie and Tara, who manipulated the conventions associated with citation practices by taking shortcuts instead of truly engaging with source texts for meaning making purposes.

In Petric and Harwood (2013), they analyzed other data sources involving Sofie as she navigated two different source-based tasks. In looking at her use of various citation practices, including paraphrasing, they found that her approaches changed in line with her understanding of the demands of the assigned tasks, thus demonstrating a level of adaptability available to more advanced L2 writers that is difficult for novice writers to achieve at their stage of development.

Advocating for the importance of researching L2 students' legitimate textual appropriation practices, Petric (2012) examined how L2 students utilized direct quoting as a legitimate textual appropriation strategy in their MA theses. By comparing high-rated and low-rated theses differed in terms of the use of direct quotation and interviewing the students regarding their motivations for using direct quoting, Petric (2012) found that high-rated MA theses included a much larger number of direct quotations than low-rated theses, with high-rate theses featuring quotation fragments and low-rated theses using longer quotations taken from source texts. As Petric (2012) argues, although the quotation fragments were not always used appropriately, they did reflect the relatively successful L2 writers' efforts in processing source text material to make the borrowed text fit in their own writing, both co-textually and contextually. The seemingly simple practice of direct quoting thus provides a way for L2 researchers to explore the developmental trajectories of novice L2 writers as they experiment with unfamiliar writing conventions associated with textual appropriation, including paraphrasing.

2.2.3 The cultural perspective.

Apart from examining ESL students' textual borrowing practices from a developmental perspective, second language writing researchers have also investigated cultural issues related to textual appropriation, seeking to uncover the complexity of the seemingly neutral activity of source use. Recent writing researchers have emphasized the crucial role that culture plays in influencing writers' decision making processes (Uysal, 2008), highlighting the importance of studying the interplay between individual ESL learners' language learning and their dynamic cultural repertoires (e.g., Atkinson, 1999).

As Leki (1991) argues, for instance, it is critical for writing instructors to incorporate culture in the teaching of academic writing conventions so that ESL writers can understand that their inadequate writing performances according to the Western standards are not simply a result of their lack of competence, but partly due to the influence of their previous cultural and educational experience.

Adopting a cultural lens, researchers studying ESL learners' textual appropriation behaviors have examined how these novice writers' first language literacy experience intersects with their exploration of the target academic culture in English. As Sherman (1992) points out, while introducing the writing conventions expected in Anglophone universities, second language writing instructors are essentially "teaching culture" (p. 197), a point also noted in Macbeth's work (2006, 2010). In order to ease students with the learning of the new culture, L2 writing teachers need to understand the culturally varied views towards the common practices with regard to textual borrowing (Moore, 1997; Scollon, 1994). ESL writers from diverse cultural backgrounds may not have an understanding of plagiarism consistent with that in the U.S. academic setting (Howard, 2001; Pecorari, 2003), and thus are unable to accurately identify what counts as plagiarism according to Western standards (Deckert, 1993). L2 students who are educated mainly through rote memorization in their L1 are inclined to repeat words from sources in their writing as a composing strategy (Pecorari, 2003). It could be argued that how they learned in their L1 context has hardwired them to operate in the same way in the target language. For example, when borrowing information from sources, Chinese writers may tend to verbatim quote idioms, proverbs, and lines from classical works or

famous people in order to appeal to the audience who shares the same literacy background and indirectly bring out their own points (Liao & Chen, 2009).

Investigating how writers from different cultural backgrounds construct summary sentences, Moore (1997) argues that the choice of author-prominent and information-prominent citations reflects writers' perceptions towards texts. The Australian participants in the study frequently started their sentences with the author's last name, showing a keen awareness that the information cited was based on an individual author's interpretations. The Asian writers, however, were more reluctant to incorporate the original author in their sentences; rather, they tended to focus on the explanations of the information obtained from the source, adopting a less critical perspective towards the truth value of the text (Moore, 1997). Although taking other writers' ideas and words as one's own is likely to be perceived as inappropriate across all cultural contexts (Liu, 2005; Wheeler, 2009), the conventions regarding the preferred ways to represent sources may vary from culture to culture (Hyland, 2001). For Asian students, in particular, there may be a culturally engrained respect for the words of successful authors that prevents them from, in their eyes, tampering with those words. Asking them to do so in another language is, in a sense, to ask them to violate a deeply rooted cultural norm. Therefore, second language writing instructors need to understand the different ways in which ESL learners are used to constructing and representing textual meanings in their native languages in order to maximally utilize cultural resources in teaching (Giroux, 1990). As Leki (1991) explains, it is critical for writing instructors to "try to understand and

appreciate…to realize that logics different from our own are not necessarily illogical" (p. 806).

One important issue related to the cultural influence on ESL students' textual borrowing practices concerns the notion of authorship and how different cultures conceptualize the responsibilities of readers and writers. What ESL writing instructors often emphasize as a "global academic norm" (Pennycook, 1996, p. 218) in Anglophone universities in fact represents one particular view of textual ownership, which is deeply rooted in the intellectual development of Western history (Matalene, 1985; Pennycook, 1996). ESL students who are from diverse cultural backgrounds may have developed different perceptions towards textual relationships and what counts as appropriate textual borrowing (Scollon, 1995). For instance, ESL students may find the concept of paraphrasing rather strange, since they are used to perceiving the practice of retaining original wording as demonstrating the accuracy of their comprehension and showing respect to the authors (Sherman, 1992). In other words, ESL learners' preference for retaining the original words and phrases may be attributed to their conceptualization of texts as authoritative rather than dialogic (Abasi, Akbari and Graves, 2006).

Due to these cultural discrepancies, ESL writers often find it difficult to understand such key terms as "common knowledge" and "one's own ideas" that are taken for granted by experienced academic writers. Uncertain about what counts as "common knowledge," ESL learners struggle to define the boundary between what needs to be acknowledged and what does not. As Chandrasoma, Thompson and Pennycook (2004) argue, "what is considered common knowledge for one individual may not be the same

for another" (p. 181). In fact, common knowledge in academic writing may be "an intangible domain" (Chandrasoma, Thompson & Pennycook, 2004, p. 184), where ESL writers, who are unfamiliar with the general English writing conventions, often stumble. ESL writers may also struggle to distinguish between their own ideas and source information because their ideas sometimes seem to overlap with those presented in source texts (Rinnert & Kobayashi, 2005; Sun, 2009).

Furthermore, international students who take a collective view towards textual ownership and value modesty and indirectness in interpersonal communication often encounter difficulties in trying to fulfill the common expectation of presenting an individual voice through the incorporation of sources, since the direct, clear and straightforward type of stance expected in English academic writing is largely a cultural preference situated in the context of Western academia (Atkinson, 2001; Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999). Accordingly, learners' textual borrowing practices need to be examined in relation to "authorial identity construction" (Abasi, Akbari & Graves, 2006, p. 102), since students' understanding of the relationship with texts and their legitimate identities as novice writers plays an essential role in determining how they approach textual borrowing. An unavoidable dilemma thus emerges: on the one hand, students need to cite scholarly articles to display their knowledge as legitimate participants in the target academic community; on the other hand, they are also expected to present their own voices as creative writers who contribute new perspectives to the current scholarship (Pennycook, 1996; Shi, 2010). Struggling between the two seemingly opposite demands,

ESL writers may become more confused about the conventions guiding source uses in English academic writing.

2.3 Summary

As is shown in the literature review, second language writing researchers in recent years have investigated ESL writers' textual appropriation behaviors from different perspectives. There is, indeed, strong interest in this area, as demonstrated, for example, by the recent publication of special, guest-edited issues of the *Journal of Second Language Writing* (Polio & Shi, 2012) and the *Journal of English for Academic Purposes* (Pecorari & Shaw, 2013).

Despite the growing attention directed to novice academic writers' textual appropriation practices, little is known about how novice ESL writers from various cultural backgrounds are socialized into the practice of paraphrasing: how they learn to paraphrase, how they engage in the actual practice of paraphrasing, what obstacles they encounter, what decisions they make in producing a paraphrase, and how they connect reading and writing while paraphrasing. The majority of the existing studies, which focus on the comparisons of L1 and L2 writers and the categorization of different types of paraphrasing, are quantitative in nature, providing insufficient information about how individual writers participate in the complex processes of paraphrasing (though the recently published special issues of journals cited earlier show a growing interest in qualitative studies). In addition, most studies on textual appropriation seem to have focused on the problematic aspects of ESL learners' developing skill of integrating texts into their own writing, as Petric (2007, 2012) points out. In fact, the issue of plagiarism is

almost unavoidable in articles that address novice L2 writers' citation and paraphrasing practices. Such research tends to concentrate on students' written products, i.e., the outcomes of their source text use and paraphrasing, instead of the processes by which they generated those products. Thus, there is still relatively little information about L2 writers' lived experiences as related to paraphrasing.

To address the gap in the literature, the current qualitative study attempts to produce an in-depth account of undergraduate international students' paraphrasing experiences in an advanced ESL writing class. The theoretical and methodological insights of language socialization and academic socialization research thus become particularly relevant. The emphasis of language socialization research on the examination of participants' lived experiences in naturalistic settings and how they, as individuals, negotiate with the broader social and cultural context informs the research design of the present study and in particular data collection, whereas the insights of academic socialization research on the value-laden nature of academic discourse guided the formulation of the overarching research questions, data collection and analysis. By drawing from both language socialization and academic socialization research, this study seeks to shed light on the lived experiences of how novice L2 academic writers are socialized into paraphrasing and negotiate with the cultural expectations associated with the practice.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Seeking to investigate undergraduate ESL students' paraphrasing experiences in an advanced ESL composition course and how they are gradually socialized into this culturally specific practice of textual appropriation, this study employs a qualitatively-oriented research design guided by the theoretical perspectives of language socialization and academic socialization. Of particular importance was the strong desire to produce an emic, i.e., inside, perspective (Agar, 2011) on paraphrasing by delving into the students' actual engagement with it, what Pomerantz & Kearney (2012, p. 227) call "small stories of personal experience." It is this emic perspective that has been underrepresented in paraphrasing research, thus leading to a limited picture of paraphrasing as those asked to engage in it—the students—experience it. The methodology selected for the project was driven by the lack of research that examines the lived experiences of novice L2 writers as they negotiate with the unfamiliar expectations of English academic writing, especially in the context of paraphrasing.

3.1 Research Site

The study was carried out in a large mid-western university in the United States, where a considerable number of international students enroll in various undergraduate programs every year. University policies require these students to take an English

placement test at the beginning of their studies, the results of which determine whether they need to take ESL writing courses and, if so, which level of class they should be placed into. The ESL composition program at the university is responsible for administering this test and making placement decisions, with each placement essay holistically scored by at least two members of the composition staff. The program offers a three-course sequence for undergraduate students (as well as one for graduate students), with each course running a full academic term. The course sequence aims to equip international undergraduate students with academic writing skills necessary for them to succeed in mainstream courses across the university. Thus, it operates within an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) orientation. Core features of academic writing are taught in a scaffolded manner, so that what is learned in one course is then built upon and extended in the next course. However, because students may be placed in different courses, many do not complete the entire sequence. Those who start in a later course are expected to know what was taught in the previous course(s), though in reality this is not necessarily the case.

3.1.1 Target writing course.

The target course under study is the last one in the sequence, the focus of which is on incorporating sources into one's writing. The course met for three times per week for a total of around five hours. The meetings on Mondays and Wednesdays, from 9:30 to 11:18, were lectures where the teacher explained key concepts and skills as related to academic writing, and meetings on Fridays, from 9:30 to 10:18, took place in a computer lab where students were assigned small writing tasks to practice what they had learned in

the lectures. Students were also expected to participate in a handful of one-to-one writing conferences, or tutorials, with their instructor. These typically ran around 20 minutes and were text-based, that is, focused on the students' writing. The program itself follows the process approach to writing in which students compose multiple drafts of essays, with the tutorials and teachers' written feedback providing important input for the revision of paper drafts. That was the case for this course during the period of study.

The major assignments of the course included a short research paper and a long research paper, with paraphrasing being taught and practiced throughout the academic term to help students develop the ability to appropriately and effectively integrate source information into their papers. These major assignments were preceded by a series of shorter writing tasks, some of which allowed students to practice various types of source text use, including a number of paraphrasing exercises.

With respect to reading assignments and the course texts, the students were assigned to read five chapters selected from the book titled *Future Science: Essays from the Cutting Edge* (2011), a collection of scientific essays written for a general audience by young scientists from a variety of disciplines. This book was chosen by the course coordinator as a required textbook used for the course, although each individual instructor was encouraged to make their own decisions as to which chapters they would like students to read for the term. The instructor of the course under study selected the following five chapters as required class readings (listed in sequential order):

1. Is Shame Necessary? (Jacquet, 2011)
2. Why Rejection Hurts (Eisenberger, 2011)
3. What Can Huge Data Sets Teach Us About Society and Ourselves? (Kleinberg, 2011)

4. Nurture, Nature, and the Stress That Is Life (Kaufer & Francis, 2011)
5. Our Brains Know Why We Do What We Do (McClure, 2011)

These essays covered topics that ranged from economics, social psychology, computer science, biology and health, and neuroscience. Although the book targeted a general audience, the writing style was still academic in nature. Apart from these texts, the instructor also occasionally distributed short essays in class as supplementary readings to help students better understand certain scientific topics and make connections between the scientific content of the chapters and everyday life.

As for assessment, unlike many undergraduate ESL writing courses in the United States, this one did not have any examinations. Students were assessed on their writing, their participation, and their attendance.

3.1.2 Student population.

Typically, most of the students who take the course come from Asian countries, including China, South Korea, Japan, Malaysia, and Indonesia, with a few from European and South American countries. Due to their diverse cultural and educational backgrounds, students in the same class may have different levels of understanding of English academic writing and different levels of exposure to it back in their home country. Some have completed a high school education in the U.S. where they are already introduced to the basics of college writing; some are transfer students from other American universities where they have completed ESL composition courses; some have successfully completed the first one or two courses in the sequence of writing courses offered by the ESL composition program and are moved up to this last course; and others are fresh out of their home countries, usually with limited knowledge of and exposure to

the use of sources in English academic writing and the concept of paraphrasing in particular. During the academic term in which the course was the research site for the study, most of the students were from China (15 out of 20).

The primary focus of the course under study is on "research writing principles and university policy regarding the use of sources" (Course packet, p. 3), with the goal of helping L2 writers develop the ability to effectively and appropriately incorporate sources into research paper writing. The specific objectives of this course included the following elements:

- Read texts with an analytical or evaluative perspective with the goal of writing
- Articulate your own ideas and use the readings to support them
- Gain competence in using APA documentation conventions
- Demonstrate an ability to edit for grammatical accuracy
- Understand summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting in the context of writing from sources (Course packet, p. 3)

As is shown on the list, paraphrasing was one of the core elements in the curriculum.

Throughout the term, various writing tasks that centered around the course objectives were assigned to students, with the aim of helping novice L2 writers to develop an adequate understanding of the key elements involved in source-based writing. These assignments included (the percentage grade breakdown is also provided):

Types of Writing Assignments	Percentage Grade Breakdown
1. Weekly writing activities	30%
2. Short research paper	20%
3. Long research paper	35%
4. In-class quizzes	10%
5. Presentation of long research paper	5%

Table 1 Types of Writing Assignments and Percentage Grade Breakdown

For the weekly writing activities, the instructor assigned short writing tasks to students to practice key concepts introduced in preceding lectures. These activities included responses to weekly readings, short paraphrasing exercises, quoting and summarizing exercises, APA style exercises, etc. Depending on the focus of the week's lectures and her observations of students' writing performances, the instructor would design these tasks herself.

The short research paper was a 2-3 page paper for which students were required to use at least two sources to answer a research question. Students were encouraged to use one chapter from the required textbook that had been covered in class and search for at least one outside source to complete this assignment. To ease students into the short research paper assignment, the teacher provided sample research questions, which were based on weekly readings, while also encouraging students to generate their own research questions. Students were asked to write two drafts for this short research paper

assignment, with one tutorial scheduled in-between the two drafts. To successfully complete this assignment, students were expected to practice identifying source material relevant to their chosen topic and incorporating information to support one's ideas by effective use of summarizing, paraphrasing and quoting. This assignment was also framed as a stepping stone that prepared students for the culminating task of the course, the long research paper.

The long research paper was a seven-page paper for which students needed to use a minimum of four quality sources to answer a research question. This time the teacher did not provide specific research questions, but rather broad topics that were intended to guide students to generate their own research questions. As for the quality of sources, the teacher specified that the sources should come from the library databases instead of random websites (She introduced how to use the library databases in class). For this assignment, students were expected to use textual appropriation strategies skillfully to smoothly integrate source information into their papers and appropriately document their sources. Compared with the short research paper, the long research paper assignment was more demanding in terms of source use in both breadth and depth. Different from the short research paper, the teacher scaffolded this assignment by asking students to first submit an outline, then two pages of the draft, then four pages of the draft and a complete draft in the end. The teacher scheduled a tutorial after the students' submission of a full draft, while providing written feedback for the outline, and the two and four pages of the draft.

Additionally, the teacher also assigned three quizzes throughout the term. For these quizzes, students were asked to respond to questions based on their understanding of the weekly readings, paraphrase a short chunk of text taken from weekly readings, summarize the main points of the readings, and identify different ways to correctly cite sources in the APA style. The tasks included in the quizzes were consistent with the focuses of the course and the weekly writing activities.

The last type of assignment in the writing course was a formal presentation based on students' long research paper. For this task, students were expected to share the content of their research papers with the whole class. They were also required to ask questions after listening to their classmates' presentations to demonstrate active engagement with the presentations. The presentations generally lasted for about 10 minutes.

3.2 Selection of Participants and Brief Participant Introductions

The participants for this quarter-long study were nine undergraduate ESL students enrolled in one of the sections of the last course in the three-course writing sequence offered by the ESL composition program, as well as the instructor and the coordinator of the course. However, the students were the primary focus of the study. The particular section of the course under study here was randomly chosen out of the many sections offered at the same time, with the purpose of minimizing the influence of subjective decisions.

3.2.1 Course coordinator.

Each of the courses in the three course sequence had a “course coordinator” whose job was to oversee the selection of course assignments and course materials as well as to work with the various individuals teaching the course. The coordinator was also expected to facilitate weekly course meetings at which the instructors discussed issues related to the course and shared teaching materials or ideas. Because the amount of teaching experience—in general and for this particular course—usually varied considerably among the instructors, these weekly meetings were expected to play an important role in ensuring that there was an appropriate degree of standardization across the teaching staff in terms of what was being taught and how it was taught, although the instructors did have some autonomy in terms of how they handled the day-to-day teaching of the course.

The coordinator of the course at the time of the study, a non-native English speaker from Asia, had worked in the ESL composition program for about eight years at the time of this study. He held a master's degree in TESOL and was also a Ph.D. candidate in TESOL. Before becoming the coordinator of the course, he served as a writing instructor and had taught all the writing courses offered by the ESL composition program, at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. He also had experiences working in the writing center in the university where the study took place before starting to teach in the composition program.

It is important to point out here that this coordinator was relatively new to the position, and he inherited many of the materials and assignments developed by the

previous coordinator, who had been supervising this course for quite a long time before leaving the position. Therefore, the curriculum that the current coordinator developed and the teaching materials he used were similar to those adopted in earlier years.

According to the coordinator, the main course objective was to help ESL students develop the competence to successfully handle source-based writing, a common type of writing assignment that the students would encounter across the disciplines. In the interview, the coordinator stated the goals of this course as follows and offered his definition of research paper for this particular course:

> "This is a course where students learn how to do research and write research. We are gonna define research loosely here, you know, not empirical research, or lab research, but it's more about using sources as part of their writing so that they would incorporate the ideas of others and then their own ideas, and they put it in writing properly so we can distinguish which ones their ideas are, and which ones are others. So the goals [of this course] are to help students be familiar with the writing convention in terms of research writing as well as to prepare them to write research papers for their other courses." (Interview, 10/6/2011)

As the coordinator acknowledged, these goals were adopted from what the previous coordinator had outlined for the course, as he believed that these goals had worked well for students who enrolled in this course in the past.

When asked how he would realize these goals, the coordinator pointed out the important roles of textual appropriation strategies, that is, quoting, paraphrasing and summarizing. According to him, these were core skills that the students in this course were expected to master in order to produce a quality research paper that incorporated other people's ideas (Interview, 10/6/2011). Out of the three skills, the coordinator emphasized paraphrasing and how it was critical to all source-based writing. As he explained:

> “You have to be able to do [paraphrasing], you have to be able to not just quote, you have to be able to use your own words, and then understand the meaning of the sentences and express that in your own words….I don’t think research paper can be completed without a paraphrase. You got to have paraphrases there. In fact, this is something I stress to my students. You are gonna have more paraphrases than quotes.” (Interview, 10/6/2011)

It is apparent that the course coordinator believed that paraphrasing was an important skill for students to grasp in order for them to be socialized in source-based writing, as “[no] research paper can be completed without a paraphrase”.

When asked how he approached the teaching of paraphrasing, the coordinator explained that he would assign paraphrasing exercises regularly for students to practice based on weekly readings. What is important to note here was that while choosing sentences from the weekly readings for these paraphrasing exercises, the coordinator would focus on “the parts that would be central to the understanding of the article” (Interview, 10/6/2011). According to him, one of the important purposes for teaching paraphrasing was to help students understand key ideas presented in a text (Interview, 10/6/2011). Because of this, the coordinator would not randomly select texts for the paraphrasing exercises, but chose those that captured the key content of an article.

Overall, the coordinator conceptualized the teaching of paraphrasing as closely related to the larger task of source-based writing. From his perspective, paraphrasing was most meaningful when used to incorporate source texts in ones’ writing. When asked how he viewed the purposes of paraphrasing, the coordinator explained:

> “One [purpose] is to show your understanding. Second is to show that you can write in English and use your own words, and also to make it flow better with your other sentences. If you just stick a quote there, sometimes the grammar doesn’t fit, the wordings don’t fit.” (Interview, 10/6/2011)

As this quote shows, the coordinator’s conceptualization of the functions of paraphrasing included both the linguistic and rhetorical aspects of paraphrasing.

3.2.2 Course instructor.

The instructor of the course, a native speaker of English, was an experienced teacher of academic writing. She held a master's degree in TESOL, and had taught both ESL composition courses designed for non-native speakers and the general first-year composition courses required for all undergraduate students, native and non-native. She also had experiences teaching argumentative writing, focusing on how to effectively construct arguments through writing. She had worked in both the community college setting and comprehensive universities. At the time when the study began, the instructor had already had eight years of teaching experiences, six of which were spent on the teaching of composition, and it was her third year working as a lecturer in the ESL composition program at the university where the study took place. Despite her experiences of working with ESL students, the instructor was quite unfamiliar with the population of Chinese students.

The instructor conceptualized paraphrasing as a key skill for students in the class to master. According to her, this particular skill was not only useful for students to complete disciplinary writing assignments, but also necessary for graduate school study, a goal shared by many of the undergraduate students. Similar to the course coordinator, the instructor of the course also explained her understanding of paraphrasing from both the reading and writing side:

> [Paraphrasing] really shows the importance of understanding of how to make use of sources, and paraphrasing specifically, you are looking at does the student

> really understand the main idea contained in this passage, can the student identify what to paraphrase, that will be the other skill that we are looking for, that you are not just rephrasing everything, you have to figure out what's important in that passage, and why they want to paraphrase that particular writer or idea. (Interview, 9/28/2011)

As shown in this quote, the instructor understood paraphrasing as achieving bigger writing purposes instead of being an isolated exercise on its own. From her perspective, paraphrasing required students to be able to comprehend source texts and select specific texts to include in their writing to achieve certain purposes.

When asked how she structured her teaching about paraphrasing, the instructor explained that because of the challenging nature of paraphrasing, she would repeatedly assign paraphrasing exercises for students to keep practicing this skill. She believed that it was through repeated practice that students would eventually master this demanding skill. In her teaching, she would sometimes choose chunks of texts from students' weekly readings and ask them to paraphrase. Other times, she would pose a reading comprehension question for students to answer, and in order to successfully respond to the question, students had to use paraphrasing in their answers. As the instructor stated,

> I'm trying to break down the barrier when it comes to paraphrasing that they freeze up... So what that takes is building up their level of comfort in doing that, so that it has to be done with repeated exercises in paraphrasing throughout the quarter (Interview, 9/28/2011)

The instructor also emphasized that she would bring dictionaries and thesauruses to class and encourage students to consult the readings from which the texts used for the paraphrasing exercises were selected, as she believed that it was important to set up "a realistic setting" (Interview, 9/28/2011) for students to practice utilizing available resources while paraphrasing.

3.2.3 Student participants.

There were nine student participants in the study, all from the same section of the course. All the nine student participants originally came from China, and had little knowledge of paraphrasing when the study began. Of the nine participants, Vera was the only one who took the second course in the sequence before enrolling in the final course under study here (she arrived one term earlier than the rest of the students). The other eight all started directly with this final course.

At the beginning of the term when the study took place, all the 20 students in the class were given a short questionnaire, which collected information about their previous English academic writing experiences and specifically their knowledge of paraphrasing. Those who were unfamiliar with the concept of paraphrasing were invited to participate in this study. As mentioned before, within the same class, there are often students who have either completed high school in the U.S. or taken ESL writing courses before. This group of learners has already developed an adequate theoretical understanding of paraphrasing, even though they may still struggle with the actual implementation. Therefore, the short questionnaire was used to distinguish between truly novice and more experienced writers in the class based on their knowledge about paraphrasing.

The total number of students taking the composition course was 20, of which 15 were Chinese students. I decided to focus on Chinese students for three reasons. First, Chinese students constitute by far the largest percentage of the international undergraduate population at the university, and are a fast growing population at many universities across the country. Research on this particular group of ESL writers,

therefore, has a general significance and enriches the possibilities for applying the study's results beyond the study itself. In addition, the Chinese students were also chosen because of the contrasting differences in the rhetorical preferences associated with source appropriation between the Chinese and English writing systems. It was felt that such differences could play an important role in the students' attempts to learn and use paraphrasing. A third consideration was that, as a native speaker of Chinese myself, I shared the same rhetorical and cultural background as the undergraduate students, which made it easy for me to communicate with the participants and understand the interplay between students' textual appropriation experiences in their L1, Chinese, and their lack of familiarity with paraphrasing in the English academic context.

It is important to note here that the only two criteria used to select the participants were their country of origin and their unfamiliarity about paraphrasing and English academic writing, as is revealed through the short questionnaire. In other words, the nine students in this study were all the Chinese students in the class who met the two criteria. I decided to include all nine students instead of making any further selection in the hope of obtaining a more representative sample. Table 1 below provides a brief introduction to the student participants; more information about them appears later in the study. The table shows that they came from a wide range of academic disciplines, a fact that allowed for meaningful comparisons to be made across their experiences with paraphrasing.

Name	Major	Year of Study
Coco	Psychology	Freshman
Jack	Chemical engineering	Freshman
Jake	Mathematics	Freshman
Lucia	Communication	Freshman
Roger	Chemistry	Freshman
Vera	Business administration	Freshman
Helen	Economics	First-term transfer student, sophomore
Wendy	Visual design	First-term transfer student, sophomore
Chuck	Business administration	First-term transfer student, sophomore

Table 2 Background Information about Participants

3.3 Data Gathering Instruments and Procedures

Seeking to fill in the gap of the existing literature by documenting the lived experiences of novice L2 academic writers as they are socialized into the practice of paraphrasing, this study drew from the methodological insights of both language socialization and academic socialization research. Guided by the framework of language socialization, this study adopted an qualitative design. By utilizing such data collection methods as classroom and tutorial observation, field notes, audio recording, document collection and interviews, this study seeks to capture what actually happens in the classroom setting as related to the teaching and learning of paraphrasing. Although the

length of the field work for this study (about ten weeks) was much shorter than that of typical language socialization studies (which are longitudinal in nature), I made sure to cover the full academic term for which the course under study lasted, aiming to produce a comprehensive portrait of the complete socialization process. Also informed by academic socialization research, this study employs data collection methods that are not commonly used in language socialization research, including questionnaire, think-aloud protocols, and text-based interviews. These methods enabled me to select focal participants for the study and helped me to understand their textual practices and decision making relevant to paraphrasing. In this section, I will describe each of the methods used in this study and explain the rationale for choosing them.

3.3.1 Questionnaire.

In order to select participants for the study, a short questionnaire was administered at the beginning of the term to identify those who were new to the context of U.S. academia and the skill of paraphrasing. Questionnaire is widely used as a practical and effective research tool to gather different types of information about participants (Alreck & Settle, 2004). For this project, a "directly administered questionnaire" (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh & Sorensen, 2006, p. 416) was used to collect information about students' previous experiences with English academic writing and paraphrasing in particular. The paper questionnaire was distributed in the first week of the term to all the students in the class. According to Ary et al. (2006), using directly administered questionnaires contributes to a high response rate; also, my presence in the classroom enabled me to clarify potential confusion that students had about certain items

in the questionnaire. At the end of the questionnaire, students were given the opportunity to indicate whether they would like to further participate in the research project (see Appendix 1 for the questionnaire). After analyzing students' responses to the questionnaire, I invited all nine Chinese writers in the class who were either freshmen or first-term transfer students. These students, who had just arrived in the U.S. not long before the study began, had relatively little knowledge about English academic writing and paraphrasing. The status of these students as newcomers to the academic community allowed me to keep track of their academic socialization experiences from the very beginning.

3.3.2 Classroom and tutorial observations.

Drawing from a language socialization perspective, I observed the writing class throughout the term in order to understand the social and cultural context where the student participants were socialized into the practice of paraphrasing, specifically focusing on how the instructor of the course introduced and explained paraphrasing, what exercises and assignments she assigned for students to practice paraphrasing, and what types of feedback she provided for students regarding their paraphrases. I also observed the participants' tutorial sessions, where the instructor discussed with the students their short and long research papers. Since these two assignments were source-based, paraphrasing became one of the major topics for the tutorial discussion. The data collected from the naturalistic setting where paraphrasing was discussed and practiced helped me to obtain a holistic understanding of the teaching and learning of paraphrasing in the focal classroom.

3.3.3 Field notes.

When conducting classroom and tutorial observations, I kept field notes that outlined how the teacher structured her teaching, the types of textual appropriation activities that she organized, the time allocated for each activity, and how she guided students to engage in these activities. I also noted down students' comments when engaging in these exercises (Most often they would talk in Chinese). I also kept my own reflective notes along the margins of the field notes, which later became the basis for the preliminary analysis of what happened in the classroom.

3.3.4 Audio recording of lectures and tutorials.

Apart from observing the classes and tutorials and taking field notes, I also audio recorded the lectures and tutorial discussions. At the beginning of each class lecture or tutorial, I would place a digital recorder close to the instructor to record the interactions. The students were aware of the recorder, but generally found it unobtrusive. These recordings enabled me to maintain both the accuracy and specificity of the data, and in a sense allowed me to revisit the classroom setting when necessary for data analysis. The combination of field notes and audio recordings helped me to obtain a relatively accurate and comprehensive portrait of the naturalistic setting under study and the interactions that occurred in relation to paraphrasing.

3.3.5 Document collection.

With the focus of this study set on writing, I also collected all relevant documents, including the participants' placement and diagnostic tests, syllabus, the course packet, weekly readings, their drafts of short and long research papers, the teacher's written

feedback for their drafts, in-class handouts, short paraphrasing exercises and quizzes. These documents enabled me to understand how the class was structured in general and around paraphrasing in particular. The drafts of the short and long research papers were later used to conduct text-based interviews with the participants to elicit their thinking and decision making related to paraphrasing and textual appropriation. These documents provided valuable information about how the participants engaged in the practice of paraphrasing and utilized it in their research paper writing.

3.3.6 Think-aloud protocols.

Apart from collecting the in-class short paraphrasing exercises, I also conducted three rounds of think-aloud protocols at the beginning, middle and end of the term to explore how the students made decisions while engaging in the activity of paraphrasing. Think-aloud protocols are commonly used by second language acquisition researchers to investigate learners' cognitive processes while performing L2-related tasks, such as reading (Leow & Morgan-Short, 2004). The "introspective, non-metalinguistic verbalizations" (Leow & Morgan-Short, 2004, p. 37) enable researchers to better understand the unobservable thinking processes that second language learners undergo. Although controversy still exists regarding the effectiveness of think-aloud protocols as a data collection method given what some see as its artificiality (Smagorinsky, 1994), it still helped to reveal how my participants tackle paraphrasing and what decisions they made throughout the process.

During the think-alouds, the participants were asked to complete a short paraphrasing task while speaking out their thoughts. I selected one short paragraph from

the weekly readings as the source text to paraphrase. This was done in the attempt to resemble the short paraphrasing exercises that the students were often assigned in class. Before each student participated in the individual think-aloud, I organized an informal meeting with them, during which I explained and demonstrated what a think-aloud was through the use of a sample recorded think-aloud. I also provided practice opportunities for them to become familiar with the process before the real think-alouds took place. All three rounds of the think-aloud protocols with the nine participants were audio recorded.

In order to create a comfortable environment for the participants, I did not set a time limit for each think-aloud; instead, students themselves decided on the length of time that they needed to complete the paraphrasing task. Also, I did not specify the language used for the think-aloud protocols; rather, I asked the participants to choose a language (either English or Chinese) that they felt most comfortable using to articulate their thoughts. Although most of the students in the class were fluent in English, some of them preferred to use their native language, Chinese, in think-aloud protocols given the cognitive demands of the task. In total I arranged three rounds of think-aloud protocols at the beginning, middle and the end of the term, seeking to increase the consistency of the data and track possible changes that took place in participants' paraphrasing practices. These think-alouds took place in a quiet room, sometimes in a classroom not in use and other times in a group study room in participants' dorms, depending on the availability. Although I did not set a time limit for the think aloud, most students finished the whole process within 30 minutes.

3.3.7 Text-based interviews.

Another major research method used for this study was text-based interview. Towards the middle of the term, the participants started utilizing paraphrasing as a way to integrate source information into their short and long research papers. I collected the participants' drafts of these two assignments and used them as the basis of text-based interviews. Unlike think-alouds, which are introspective in nature, text-based interviews are retrospective (Leow & Morgan-Short, 2004); that is, participants are asked to recollect what they have done previously with certain data presented as stimulus. In that regard they functioned similar to recall protocols. For this study, I provided my student participants with their drafts of the two papers, highlighted the paraphrases and asked them to recall the decisions they had made during the paraphrasing processes (e.g. what to paraphrase, when to paraphrase, and what accounts as a satisfactory paraphrase). I also included interview questions concerning their perceptions about the roles that paraphrasing played in their papers in order to discover the reasons why they chose to do what they did. The interview questions were developed based on my observations of the participants' in-class paraphrasing practices as well as their take-home assignments. Following Glesne's (2006) suggestions about developing interview questions, I mostly designed open-ended questions that encouraged the participants to fully express themselves without feeling judged, seeking to capture an emic perspective. Each meeting lasted for about one hour, and all the meetings with the participants were audio recorded. By using text-based interviews to collect data, I hope to generate "contextualized

representations of the participants' perspectives" (Prior, 1995, p. 321) regarding the learning of paraphrasing in the advanced academic writing course under study here.

3.3.8 Interviews with the instructor and course coordinator.

Apart from working with the student participates, I also interviewed the teacher of the course at the beginning and the end of the term, seeking to investigate how she understood paraphrasing, its role in English academic writing as well as the major difficulties and challenges that she observed in students' writing. In the end-of-term interview, I also provided the instructor with sample paraphrases produced by the participants and asked her to explain how she evaluated these paraphrases. The two interviews helped me to understand how the teacher conceptualized the teaching and learning of paraphrasing, which is critical for generating an overall picture of the socialization process. At the beginning of the term, I also interviewed the coordinator of the course, who decided on the teaching materials used for the course and was responsible for selecting the types of tasks assigned in the course. This interview was done in the attempt to capture how the instructing team understood paraphrasing.

3.4 Researcher Subjectivity

As Flick (2009) explains, "qualitative methods take the researcher's communication with the field and its members as an explicit part of knowledge instead of deeming it an intervening variable" (p. 16). The researcher's subjectivity thus becomes an integral part of data collection and analysis in qualitative research. In the study of paraphrasing, my background as a native speaker of Chinese, a novice L2 academic

writer, and an L2 writing instructor positioned me as a unique participant in the research process.

Sharing the same language and culture with the participants, I was able to understand the students' previous educational, rhetorical and cultural background, the knowledge of which was essential in uncovering the role that the participants' L1 literacy experiences played in their learning of paraphrasing. As a novice L2 writer myself, I experienced the many challenges as related to paraphrasing and source-based writing that the participants' encountered in their learning. The shared cultural background and learning experiences, to a great extent, helped me to see things as the participants did. Also beneficial was the fact that I had taught sections of the course and so was quite familiar with its goals and assignments. The combination of my shared background with the students and my prior teaching experience with the course made the emic perspective possible, and richer, for this study. Yet, compared with the undergraduate students in this study, I was more aware of the expectations that academic writers were held up to in relation to paraphrasing and source-based writing because of my experiences as a writing instructor. My knowledge of English academic writing thus enabled me to identify gaps and mismatches in participants' socialization experiences.

Despite these advantages brought by my own background, I was also aware of the importance of not letting my own assumptions get in the way of capturing the participants' voices. This awareness led me to the choice of such research instruments as think-aloud protocols and text-based interviews to elicit the thinking of the nine Chinese undergraduate students.

3.5 Data Analysis

3.5.1 Treatment of data.

This project explored how novice ESL writers learn the skill of paraphrasing and apply it to source-based writing tasks, seeking to provide “thick description and grounded interpretation” (Prior, 1995, p. 321) of ESL learners’ paraphrasing experiences in their academic writing development. For data analysis, I employed the commonly used qualitative analysis method “constant comparative method” (Ary et al., 2006), which requires iterative and progressive data analysis throughout the research process. All the think-alouds and (text-based) interviews were transcribed right after they were collected. ExpressScribe, a free software program specially designed for transcription, was used to facilitate the process. Guided by the research questions, I used “thematic analysis” (Glesne, 2006, p. 147) to code the data according to emerging themes relevant to the topic of novice ESL writers’ paraphrasing practices and experiences. Based on the codes, new categories were generated, and existing ones “changed, merged, omitted” (Ary et al., 2006, p. 499).

Specifically, I first analyzed their responses to the short questionnaires distributed at the beginning of the term and obtained information about the participants' previous literacy experiences related to paraphrasing and their levels of familiarity with this practice.

I also went through all the class recordings and transcribed the parts relevant to the teaching of paraphrasing. I analyzed my field notes and highlighted the instruction that the teacher provided for the students related to paraphrasing.

I transcribed all the think-aloud protocols right after collecting them and coded the linguistic decisions that the participants made during the process of paraphrasing. I also analyzed the actual paraphrases that the participants produced and identified linguistic features that marked their novice status. I then tried to connect their paraphrasing practices with their thinking revealed in the think-aloud protocols. It is worth pointing out here that I did not follow the conventional categorical method for analyzing think-alouds, as I used the think-alouds as a way to dig into participants' thinking and decision making processes in relation to their actual paraphrases. In other words, instead of looking at the think-aloud data on its own, I analyzed it together with the paraphrases that the participants produced. By pairing up the two data sources, I was able to understand the participants' reasons and rationales for making specific linguistic changes in their paraphrases.

For the text-based interviews, I transcribed all the interview recordings, focusing on how the participants made rhetorical decisions as related to using paraphrasing in their research papers. I coded their answers according to the patterns that emerged from the interviews across the nine participants, and then analyzed their research papers to examine how their decisions influenced their paraphrasing practices.

I also transcribed the two interviews with the course instructor and the one interview with the coordinator, and coded the transcripts with a focus on how the instructor and coordinator conceptualized paraphrasing and the teaching of it.

It is important to note here that the above data analysis procedures were ongoing throughout the research process. The tentative findings generated from one type of

analysis influenced how I proceeded with the analysis using other procedures. Shuttling back and forth between the different analytic procedures enabled me to establish connections between different data sources and generate a fuller picture of what happened in the classroom as related to the teaching and learning of paraphrasing.

3.5.2 Triangulation.

As Glesne (2006) explains, "[d]ata analysis involves organizing what you have seen, heard, and read so that you can make sense of what you have learned" (p. 147). Therefore, triangulation is important for researchers to develop a complete picture of the stories told in different sources of data and whether (or how) the stories are different from what has been described in current literature. In order to achieve triangulation for this study, I went through all thematic patterns generated based on my analysis of the transcripts of think-alouds, (text-based) interviews, as well as participants' actual writing, looking for overlaps as well as inconsistencies. I also analyzed the participants' responses to the short questionnaires and cross checked their answers with the interview data where they elaborated on their prior experiences with paraphrasing and source-based writing. In addition, I transcribed the class recordings where the instructor engaged the student participants in the learning and practice of paraphrasing and analyzed my field notes to cross check the accuracy of information. I also transcribed the interviews with the instructor and the course coordinator, seeking to understand their perspectives about the teaching of paraphrasing. As Prior (1995) emphasizes, it is important to attend to both textual and contextual features while studying writing, and it is through triangulation of data that researchers are able to "address not only the circulation of words among texts,

but also how those words reflected and partially constituted situated negotiations over knowledge, identity, and community" (p. 321-322). By analyzing data collected through different methods and capturing both the students' and instructor's perspectives, I seek to provide a comprehensive picture of how novice ESL writers are socialized into the practice of paraphrasing in the advanced academic writing course.

Chapter 4: Crossing Cultural Boundaries: Novice L2 Writers' Engagement with Paraphrasing Within the Cultural Dimension

In this chapter and the two chapters that follow, I will report major findings of the study with regard to international undergraduate students' experiences and practices of learning to paraphrase and utilizing the skill in research paper writing. As these L2 writers are socialized into source-based writing, a type of writing task commonly assigned in the Anglophone university context, paraphrasing operates as one of the basic and yet significant entry points through which these novice academic writers start to make sense of textual appropriation and gradually develop the competence of interacting with source texts for the purpose of their writing. For many L2 writing teachers, paraphrasing is not only an important tool to be used in writing about sources in academic essays, but also serves as a valuable indicator of L2 writers' academic reading ability because of the array of reading and writing skills necessary to paraphrase effectively. From this perspective, L2 writing teachers may assign paraphrasing tasks as a way of assessing L2 writer' command of important subskills of reading and writing. By documenting L2 writers' actual engagement with learning to paraphrase and apply it to source-based writing, this study aims to shed light on the complexities involved as novice

academic writers from different cultural backgrounds first enter the “strange land” (McCarthy, 1987) of Anglophone academia.

Based on the analysis of data, I will describe the participants’ experiences and practices of paraphrasing from three dimensions: linguistic, rhetorical and cultural, seeking to provide a comprehensive picture of the negotiation that occurred as these L2 writers attempted at the unfamiliar and challenging task of paraphrasing. Source-based writing in general, and paraphrasing in particular, are implicated in and shaped by these three dimensions, though L2 writers’ engagement with these dimensions remains an underdeveloped area of L2 writing scholarship. Considering the overarching role that culture plays as novice L2 writers' learn and practice paraphrasing, I will present the cultural dimension of their learning experiences first, seeking to provide a general background for the upcoming chapters about the linguistic and rhetorical dimensions.

The focus of Chapters 4, 5 and 6 is on the reporting of the study’s findings; interpretations of the findings in relation to previous research in this area, and especially in response to the study’s research questions, will be offered in Chapter 7 to provide a deeper discussion of the meaning of the findings. When presenting the findings, I will not follow the perhaps more common path of a multiple case study approach, as the design of the study permits more than just the analysis of individual experiences.

As explained in Chapter 3, when selecting the participants for the study, I intentionally included all Chinese students in the research site who were either freshmen or first-term transfer students as participants of the study, seeking to generate a fairly representative sample of the target student population, especially at a time when

Mainland Chinese students have become, in many American universities, the largest group of international undergraduate students. Apart from nationality and years of stay in the United States, no other sub-parameters were used to exclude participants from the study (there was one freshman Chinese student who originally agreed to participate but dropped out later on, as he started missing classes regularly). In this sense, the nine participants can be considered as random representatives of the broader category of Chinese undergraduate students new to the Anglophone university context. Therefore, instead of considering the participants as nine separate cases, I chose to view them as a whole group, the individual experiences of which constituted the jigsaw pieces needed to form an overall picture of the paraphrasing experiences of Chinese undergraduate students new to Anglophone academic setting. The findings of the study can then be applicable to not just these nine individuals, but the larger group represented by them. Because of this consideration, I will organize the three findings chapters around the major themes within the linguistic, rhetorical and cultural dimensions that emerged through the comparisons across the nine participants instead of presenting the findings by cases. Individual cases and examples will be analyzed when relevant to illustrate the common patterns.

4.1 Introduction to Chapter 4

While other dimensions also apply, paraphrasing is fundamentally a culturally-shaped practice, as it reflects the Western culture's views about textual ownership and manipulation. As contrastive rhetoric research has shown, the importance of and approaches to paraphrasing vary across cultures. As a particular way of using source

information, paraphrasing is a culturally rooted literacy practice which achieves, in the case of English, specific rhetorical objectives highly valued in the academic context. ESL writers, who come from other rhetorical and cultural backgrounds, are likely to be unfamiliar with the conventions associated with textual appropriation and attribution in academic English. In fact, many of them may have never heard of paraphrasing before, let alone understand why and how it should be used as a tool to incorporate source text material into their writing. Also, they may have developed an understanding of textual appropriation based on their L1 writing experiences, which differ from the expectations in the English academic writing. Thus, to understand L2 writers' experiences with paraphrasing, it is necessary to explore the cultural dimension of those experiences. Such an exploration creates an important foundation from which to then examine other dimensions of the paraphrasing experience. Here it must be remembered that, above all else, students are cultural beings, and L2 writers at the undergraduate level enter L2 writing courses having already been shaped for many years by their native culture, including its writing practices and its attitudes and expectations regarding writing. Thus, it is essential to understand these writers first within the cultural dimension.

Despite the cultural challenges involved for L2 writers to learn to paraphrase, the concept of paraphrasing and the culturally shaped rhetorical functions associated with it are often taken for granted by expert academic writers, who are insiders of a disciplinary community and thus have greater command of its source-based practices. This can lead to a lack of awareness or inadequate understanding of the experiences (and especially the struggles) of novice writers, who at best wander on the periphery as outsiders. Naturally,

what these novice writers choose to do (or perhaps have to do) when completing paraphrasing tasks is to utilize whatever resources (e.g. their L1 literacy experience, their common sense, random guesses) they have at hand to try to make sense of the culturally specific expectations that they are held up to. The final products, not surprisingly, are often less than satisfactory. As the data shows in this chapter, L2 writers' efforts to learn to paraphrase entail constant negotiation at the cultural level. Therefore, it is imperative for second language writing researchers to critically re-examine what is commonly hidden in the teaching and learning of paraphrasing and spell out what is taken for granted.

In this section, I will describe the novice L2 writers' engagement with paraphrasing at the cultural level. New to the context of academic writing and the concept of paraphrasing, the participants in the study struggled to acquire this culturally rooted skill for incorporating source information. Coming from a different rhetorical and cultural background, these Chinese students had to negotiate between their previous literacy background and the new and unfamiliar expectations in English academic writing. As is revealed in the data, the students encountered major challenges understanding what paraphrasing was, why they were required to paraphrase, and what constituted successful paraphrasing, On a larger scale, they also wrestled with such questions as why they had to incorporate sources in their papers as well as how to interact with source texts critically and analytically. With big question marks lingering in their minds amidst these culturally-oriented factors, these novice L2 writers, understandably, chose to play safe and resisted using paraphrasing in their writing. In light of these findings, and in order to

better help learners understand paraphrasing and become active users of this technique, it is important for L2 writing researchers to examine paraphrasing from a cultural perspective.

In this section, I will discuss how the element of culture played out in the participants' learning of paraphrasing, seeking to reveal the gaps between learners' previous literacy experiences in Chinese and the common expectations in English academic writing, as well as between learners' conceptualization of paraphrasing and that of the instructor. Analyzing both the big culture of Chinese rhetoric and the small culture within the particular classroom under study, I hope to provide a contextualized documentation of how different types and levels of culture intersected in the teaching and learning of paraphrasing.

4.2 Participants' Previous Literacy Background

The novice L2 writers in this study, who were either freshmen or first-term transfer students, were all new to the English academic writing context. As they started learning new concepts and practices such as paraphrasing, these students' prior experiences with writing in Chinese as well as their previous English education received in China naturally played a role. Although the nine participants came from different geographical areas of China, their prior writing experiences in Chinese and English were quite similar in several major aspects. Based on the interview data, I will discuss in this section what the participants' experiences with writing in both Chinese and English were before they came to the U.S. and how such experiences affected their understanding of and responses to paraphrasing and source-based writing in general.

4.2.1 Writing in Chinese.

The participants in the study all had extensive writing experiences in their native language, Chinese, before starting their study in the U.S, as they were required to take mandatory Chinese lessons from elementary school all the way through high school (The title of these Chinese lessons is *Yuwen*, the literal translation of which is "language and characters"). Although there was not a separate writing class in the curriculum used in China, the students were regularly assigned different types of writing tasks in the Chinese lessons. According to the participants, the writing tasks were mostly in the form of free writing and reflection papers, where they were expected to write about a randomly assigned topic and express their opinions or feelings. In elementary and middle school, the most common genre was narrative writing, and the participants were required to write a paragraph or a complete essay, depending on their linguistic proficiency at that time, in order to tell a personal story. Some topics that the participants mentioned in the interviews included: my most memorable experience, my first bike, the best gift I have received, etc. As the students explained, these topics were mostly about their everyday life, and the focus was on how to clearly narrate a story. As they continued to high school, the common genre changed from narrative writing to argumentative writing. Instead of simply explaining to readers what happened, the students were expected to develop a coherent argument around a general topic. This emphasis on argumentative writing was consistent with the requirements for the writing component in the National College Entrance Exam at the end of the students' high school study. It is interesting to note that some of the sample topics given by the participants in the interviews were very

abstract ones, such as maturity, happiness, dreams, etc. In the interviews, Wendy specifically described one topic that she considered unforgettable: “I remember this one topic, which is ‘hidden wings’. I think this topic is based on a popular song about hope. But this is so vague! How can I write about it?” (Interview, 10/6/2011) In order to support their arguments about these abstract topics, the students were encouraged to use well-known lines from classic literary works, anecdotes of famous historical figures, proverbs and quotes as evidence. Sometimes, they would also use personal stories as supporting evidence to help construct their arguments.

Although the students were assigned writing tasks regularly (the participants reported that they had to write an essay almost every week), little instruction and feedback were given by the teachers to guide the students to complete the tasks. According to the participants, their Chinese teachers rarely talked about writing in lectures and often provided no guidelines about how to write an essay based on the given topics. The only instruction specific to writing that the students seemed to have received was about the overarching structure of a particular genre. When being taught narrative writing, for example, the participants were introduced to the common ways of organizing their essay. For example, they learned from the teachers that they could start their essay with an interesting story to indirectly introduce the topic and conclude the essay with an uplifting thought that would inspire the reader.

As the participants recalled in the interviews, the teachers seemed to believe that writing in Chinese was something not teachable, and so students had to rely on their *wuxing*, the ability to come to realize on one’s own, to produce good essays in Chinese.

The students seemed to share this belief as well. Helen, for example, said, “The topics are philosophical in nature, and you have to rely on yourself to figure out how to address the topics.” (Interview, 9/30/2011) Lucia expressed the same opinion: “A good writer in Chinese is born this way; it’s kind of hard to achieve this by efforts.” (Interview, 10/2/2011) It seems that the Chinese teachers held a tacit agreement that students should be able to imitate what they had read and transfer from their reading of Chinese texts the rhetorical and linguistic elements of Chinese writing to their own writing.

Perhaps because of this tacit agreement, the writing instructors offered little feedback on the students’ essays. The most common format in which feedback was provided was the reading aloud of an exemplar essay selected from the whole class. All the participants reported that their Chinese teachers used this format while giving feedback. As Coco described in one of the interviews, “the teacher would select one or two papers from the class, read them out loud, and then use such adjectives as ‘stylish’, ‘elegant’, ‘poetic’ to tell us why a particular essay was considered a good one.” (Interview, 9/30/2011) According to the participants, the focus of their teachers’ feedback was generally on *wencai*, the elegance of writing, and rarely on content and organization. As the students reported, the teachers would offer general and vague evaluations of a chosen essay, which to them was not particularly useful for their own improvement. As Lucia vividly described,

> When I was listening to the teachers read the essays, I would agree that they were beautifully written, and much better than mine. But this is all I got. I still had no idea how to make my essays look like them. I keep writing in the same way and the same students’ essays were chosen as good ones over and over again. (Interview, 10/2/2011)

When asked how they understood *wencai* (the elegance of writing), the participants gave out the following criteria: extensive use of parallel sentence structure and lines from classic poems or other literary works. As Lucia said in an interview,

> We were all encouraged to use the same examples, such as the famous historian Sima Qian's tortuous life experiences. What matters is how you use emotional and eloquent language to present this example. This is what distinguishes a good essay from a bad one. We are encouraged to use poems, because they make our essays sound fancy. (Interview, 10/2/2011)

As this quote shows, Lucia held the belief that linguistic elegance was far more important than the content of an essay in Chinese. To her, what mattered was not whether the examples chosen to support one's ideas were effective, but whether the writer was able to present the examples in beautiful language.

Wendy reported a similar view: "The sample essays that the teacher chose usually use a lot of parallel sentence structures to add to the eloquence of the writing. The content may not be that good, actually, because it doesn't offer anything concrete. But the language was always beautiful." (Interview, 10/6/2011) Here again, the Chinese teachers' tacit assumption about the critical role that imitation played in helping students to write better in Chinese is quite evident. The teachers seemed to believe that students would imitate in their own writing the linguistically elegant styles of the model essays, the feature of which characterized good writing in Chinese. It is interesting to note that although participants came from different provinces in China, their understanding of good writing in Chinese was quite similar.

Another important feature of Chinese writing reported by the participants was that a good essay written in Chinese should evoke emotions and feelings on the readers' part.

Coco, for example, said, “A good Chinese essay makes the readers cry” (Interview, 9/30/2011), and Lucia said “A good Chinese essay should make the readers feel touched in the heart.” (Interview, 10/2/2011) In the interviews, all the participants mentioned this as an essential element of good writing in Chinese: good writing has the ability to make the reader empathize with the writer’s feelings and emotions. This is consistent with the two criteria the participants put forward for *wencai*. According to the students, the use of parallel structure, which would help a writer develop a strong voice and an eloquent style, was particularly effective in conveying feelings, whereas citing famous lines from classic works would enable the writer to evoke a sense of shared admiration from the reader's part, thus helping to establish an emotional connection between the writer and the reader.

4.2.2 Writing in English.

Contrary to the extensive writing experiences in Chinese, the participants had limited opportunities to write in English. Although English was a required subject in elementary, middle and high school, the focus of instruction was primarily on vocabulary, grammar and reading, with little or no attention directed to writing. According to the participants, the English instruction that they had received prior to their study in the U.S. was largely test-oriented, with the purpose of helping students score high in the National College Entrance Exam at the end of their high school study. Focusing on students' linguistic competence, this important exam only has a small section devoted to writing, for which students are typically asked to write a short paragraph in English, approximately 100-150 words in response to a specific prompt (e.g. describe a

picture or a photo, compose a brief bulletin notice, etc.). The nature of such writing tasks, therefore, is not communicative.

To achieve high scores for the writing section in the National College Entrance Exam, students need to demonstrate their ability to utilize high-level vocabulary and complex sentence structures, which thus become the focus of instruction. As Lucia described, “You need to use sophisticated vocabulary to get high scores. For example, you don’t want to use ‘but’ all the time; instead, words like ‘however’ and ‘nevertheless’ are better. The English teachers told us things like this in class.” (Interview, 10/2/2011) Since the content of the writing tasks is normally outlined in the guiding instructions, the evaluation criteria are not about the ideas of the essays, but rather the accuracy and complexity of language. Naturally, the limited instruction that the students received related to English writing was geared towards these aspects. As Coco stated, “We spent most of the class time learning new words and sentence structures, mostly grammar, because they get you points in the exams.” (Interview, 9/30/2011) Roger shared a similar experience: “The teachers taught us how to use certain sentence structures in order to score high in the exam. Some sentence structures get you more points, and you need to know what they are.” (Interview, 10/3/2011) With such a strong emphasis on the linguistic aspect of English, the little feedback that the participants received from the teachers about their writing (i.e., their paragraphs), was about grammatical accuracy, vocabulary complexity and sentence structure variety. According to the participants, similar to their Chinese teachers, their English teachers would also choose a good essay or two from the class, read them aloud, and briefly talk about the linguistic features of the

essays that scored high points. This was the limited writing instruction in English as they experienced it.

The special emphasis on the accuracy and complexity of language continued in the general English courses that the transfer students in the study took at the university level. Different from the freshmen participants who had just completed high school study in China, the transfer students already had one or two years of college experiences before they came to the U.S. According to the transfer students, they had to take mandatory English lessons in college, which were almost the same as those in high school. The only participant who had a slightly different experience was Helen, who majored in English. According to her, she took two mandatory English writing courses in college, for which she had to write two 3-4 page papers per term based on topics assigned by the instructor. Although she was provided with more opportunities to write in English compared with the rest of the participants, Helen admitted that she did not learn much about how to write, since the instructor focused on the stylistic aspect of writing. As she explained:

> The teacher talked about how we should make our writing formal. For example, he told us not to use 'you' in our writing because it sounds informal. But he didn't really talk about how to develop or organize your ideas. I would just write in my own way, and I was never clear about how he graded our papers. (Interview, 9/30/2011)

Although the knowledge about formal register in English was helpful to novice L2 writers, the type of writing instruction that Helen experienced in those classes was still mechanistic in nature.

Apart from the formal English lessons that the participants took in high school (and universities), these novice L2 writers also had extensive experiences in out-of-

school English classes that prepared them for such tests as SAT and TOEFL. Since writing is an integral component of these tests, the results of which are required for the students to apply for American universities, the cram school English classes incorporated writing as part of their curriculum. Compared with the regular English lessons offered in school, these out-of-school lessons devoted more time to teaching writing because of the weight of the writing sections in the SAT and TOEFL exams. As the participants reported, their cram school teachers taught them how to generate an argument, how to use examples to support their argument as well as what types of vocabulary and sentence structures they should use in their essays. The purpose of all these, of course, was to help the students achieve high scores in the tests.

One important feature of this test-oriented instruction was the heavy use of models and templates. During the interviews, all nine participants described how their cram school English teachers used models as the anchor of teaching. Jack, for example, explained in detail how his teacher taught him writing for the SAT test:

> The teacher would focus on how to structure an essay. He said that the most common thing to do is to have three paragraphs. The first paragraph is where I present my opinion. For example, if the topic is whether cars are good or not, I need to explicitly say that cars are good in my first paragraph. In the second paragraph, I will talk about why cars are good and give an example. The last paragraph is the concluding paragraph. (Interview, 10/23/2011)

Vera also shared a similar experience:

> The teacher would tell us how to organize our paragraphs: we should use a hook at the beginning of the introduction paragraph, for example, 'Time is money', and then present our opinion, and our opinion should be 'it depends' instead of totally agreeing or disagreeing with the prompt. (Interview, 9/30/2011)

As is shown in the above quotes, the writing instruction in the cram school context was quite mechanistic, and students were told to fit their ideas into one structural template. In fact, this type of teaching was quite common across the experiences of the nine participants. It is interesting to note here that templates and models were used not just for the teaching of structuring an essay, but also for vocabulary instruction. According to the participants, their cram school instructors would give out a list of words, phrases and sentence structures, which were categorized according to essay topics or the place in an essay where they should appear (e.g., the introduction or conclusion), for all the students to remember. Some common expressions that the participants still remembered at the time of the interviews included *in my opinion*, *some people believe A, but others B*, *there is no doubt that*. Overall, the writing instruction offered in the cram schools encouraged students to imitate rather than create.

To sum up, the participants had extensive writing experiences in Chinese, although they did not receive much instruction on writing. The topics that were commonly assigned were about everyday life (sometimes very abstract). Reading and imitation seemed to be considered the two principal methods to improve one's writing in Chinese, the quality of which was largely dependent on the level of linguistic elegance and the writer's ability to evoke the reader's emotions. Contrastive to the amount of their Chinese writing experiences, the participants had limited opportunities to write in English before they came to the U.S. The writing instruction that they received in school was largely test-oriented, focusing on the accuracy and complexity of language rather than the development of ideas. The out-of-school (cram school) English classes that they took to

prepare for SAT and/or TOEFL tests relied heavily on models and templates in teaching students how to achieve high scores in these tests. Thus, writing in English had been presented to them from a strictly pragmatic and formulaic perspective; its only use was for examination purposes, and so it was presented to them in a "teach to the test" type of pedagogy. As a result, these students were equipped with very little knowledge of academic writing in English when they took the course that was the research site for this study. This is especially important information (for both Chinese and English writing) from a cultural perspective, as it constituted the culturally constructed view of writing (and writing instruction) that the participants subscribed to during the study.

4.3 Participants' Previous Knowledge of Using Sources

In addition to examining the novice L2 writers' general background in Chinese and English writing, it is also important to look specifically at these students' experiences of working with sources in order to develop an accurate understanding of the cultural schema that they were carrying with them when starting to learn paraphrasing. As the current literature has revealed, interacting with source materials is a culturally-mediated activity, and different cultures may have different expectations and preferences associated with it (Bloch & Chi, 1995). By documenting how the participants of the study understood the practice of using sources at the beginning of the term, I seek to capture how culture played out throughout the participants' learning of source-based writing in English and paraphrasing.

When asked about their experiences of using source material in Chinese writing, the participants all noted that they were not familiar with this practice, as they were not

expected to work with sources in Chinese. The only situation where they would introduce an outside text was to quote famous sayings or lines from classic literary works. According to the participants, the primary purpose of writing a Chinese essay was to share the writer's feelings and emotions with the reader. In order to achieve this purpose effectively, they should focus more of their attention on the use of linguistic devices (e.g., four-character idioms, parallel sentence structures) that would help make their essays sound eloquent. Incorporating lines from classic literary works, especially well-known ancient poems, was one of the most important strategies to use to elevate their writing style. Helen described in detail how she felt about using lines from classic literary works:

> I always tried to use lines from poems, although I was never sure where to use them and how to use them appropriately. These lines are classic, and if you can use one line after another, readers will feel that your writing sounds sophisticated and deep. If I don't use any of them, my writing sounds too plain. (Interview, 9/30/2011)

Roger shared a similar view regarding the use of lines from ancient poems:

> Good writing in Chinese has to be poetic, and the best way to achieve this effect is to use lines from ancient poets. Everybody knows these poems and believes that they are classic lines passed down from generation to generation. So if you use them in your writing, it will definitely make your writing sound better. (Interview, 10/3/2011)

As is shown in these quotes, the participants believed that the use of lines from classic literary works was a principal tool to make their writing stylish, since these lines were written by historically acclaimed poets whose writing styles are admired by the general reader.

Because of the stylistic concern, the participants emphasized the importance of keeping these quotes verbatim. As Lucia aptly pointed out, "These lines are considered to

represent the highest level of literary achievement, and they are supposed to be the best. It doesn't make sense for me to make any changes to them, because the style will be lost." (Interview, 10/2/2011) The other eight participants reported the same thinking in the interviews, stressing that direct quoting had to be used when they wanted to cite a famous poet. In fact, the students explained that if they were unable to remember the exact lines, they should choose not to cite them at all, as any slight change of the wording would likely to cause the reader to doubt their knowledge of the classic works and thus their writing competence. It is also worth noting here that when citing classic lines from famous literary works, the students were not expected to provide concrete source information, as it was generally assumed that the cited lines were so well-known that the reader would be able to recognize them as being taken from classic works. In this sense, paraphrasing was nonexistent and could be called a concept completely foreign to the participants of the study.

When asked how they collected the classic lines from poems and other literary works to use in their essays, the participants all said that extensive reading was the only way. It is interesting to note here that although reading seemed to be considered important in enabling them to quote classic lines, the way in which the students interacted with these source texts was quite passive; that is, they would simply try to memorize the poems without thinking about the situations where the lines could be used. As Coco put it, "There is not a particularly good way. You just need to memorize as many poems as possible, and then they should come to you when you write." (Interview, 9/30/2011) Here *wuxing*, the ability to come to realize on ones' own, comes into play again. The

participants seemed to believe that if they were able to memorize as many poems as possible, they would naturally develop the ability to use them effectively in their own writing. It could be said that the participants did not have an engaging relationship with the texts that they read. Reading was strictly a functional or pragmatic activity.

In terms of the participants' experiences of using sources in their English writing, the situation was quite different. For most of their writing tasks assigned in schools in China, the students did not need to use any source material at all because of the short length of the assignments. For the SAT and TOEFL writing tasks, the students were encouraged to use famous people's examples to back up their arguments. When asked how they would collect such examples, all nine participants reported that their cram school English teachers provided them with a pool of examples that could be used in response to different prompts. Some common examples that the students mentioned included: Van Gogh's suicide (to address topics related to the importance of mental health), Beethoven's pursuit of music (to address topics related to persistence and determination), Steve Jobs's success (to address topics related to dream), etc. On the surface, the students were working with information obtained from outside sources; at a deeper level, however, what they were doing was memorizing a number of examples and inserting them into their essays mechanistically based on the cram school teachers' instruction. What is also worth noting here is that the students were never introduced to the necessity of attributing these examples to any sources. Since the cram school teachers would not mention where the examples were obtained, the students were completely unaware of the need to provide citations in their essays. In this sense, the expectations

that the students were held up to regarding source use in English writing in China were contrastively different from those in Anglophone universities.

4.4 The Interplay of Students' Previous Literacy Experiences and Learning to Paraphrase

An investigation of the participants' previous background in Chinese and English writing as well as their experiences with using sources for writing purposes reveals the types and levels of knowledge that the learners brought with them when they started learning paraphrasing and source-based writing in the English academic writing course under study here. This cultural schema that the participants were carrying with them at the beginning of the term naturally played a role in their attempts at learning and making sense of the practice of paraphrasing. This section, therefore, is devoted to the documentation of how the novice L2 writers understood paraphrasing, seeking to highlight the culturally-shaped interplay of the participants' previous literacy experiences and the new expectations associated with paraphrasing in the English academic context.

4.4.1 What is paraphrasing?

During the initial interviews at the beginning of the term, the participants were asked to translate the term *paraphrasing* into their native language, Chinese, and explain how they decided on the translation. The seemingly simple concept of paraphrasing is in fact a culturally rooted practice, and students from other rhetorical and cultural backgrounds may have never heard of this term before. This unfamiliarity with the term itself, understandably, would cause some confusion on the students' part as they tried to

demystify the practice. The following table lists the translations that the participants generated.

Participant	**Translation of *Paraphrasing* in Chinese**
Chuck, Jake	改写 (modify and revise)
Vera	换词 (change words)
Coco	转述, 概述 (retell, summarize)
Lucia	概括大意 (summarize the general idea)
Helen	阐述 (explain and elaborate)
Wendy	用同种语言翻译 (interpret in the same language)
Roger	释义 (explain meaning)
Jack	仿写 (imitate and write)

Table 3 Participants' Translation of Paraphrasing in Chinese

As Table 3 shows, the nine participants provided a variety of Chinese terms that they considered an appropriate translation of the term *paraphrasing*. Chuck and Jake, who were the only two students offering the same Chinese translation, believed that paraphrasing was equivalent to the act of modifying and revising. The reason why both students used the same Chinese term to translate *paraphrasing* was that they both thought of a grammar task commonly assigned in their elementary Chinese lessons. According to these two students, when learning certain sentence structures in Chinese, the teacher would ask them to practice changing the structures. Jake gave an example as follows: "Chinese has a lot of sentence structures that can be used interchangeably. For instance, I can say 'I ate a steamed bun' [我吃了个包子], or I can say 'A steamed bun was eaten by

me' [包子被我吃了], or I can say 'I took a steamed bun and ate it' [我把包子吃了]". As can be seen in this example, the modifying and revising activity that Chuck and Jack referred to focused on linguistic manipulation, with the purpose of helping students to better grasp the various sentence structures in Chinese. Similar to Chuck and Jake, Vera also thought that paraphrasing was simply the act of changing wording, although she used a different Chinese term to translate *paraphrasing*. In her eyes, paraphrasing was just another linguistic exercise for L2 writers like her to demonstrate their English proficiency. This particular understanding of paraphrasing conceptualizes the activity as a linguistic exercise instead of a rhetorical tool used to achieve larger purposes in one's writing.

Except for Chuck and Jake, the other seven participants all came up with different terms for the translation of *paraphrasing*, although some of the terms share a certain level of similarity and some overlap occurred. Coco and Lucia, for example, both believed that paraphrasing was the same as summarizing. In their minds, paraphrasing was a synonym for summarizing. This particular way of understanding paraphrasing blurs the boundary between summarizing and paraphrasing, thus undermining the rhetorical functions that each of the two techniques can achieve, respectively. When asked how they decided on their translations, both Coco and Lucia mentioned the Chinese reading comprehension exercises that they were often asked to do in middle and high school. According to them, one common format used for the testing of reading comprehension in Chinese was summary, for which they were given a passage or a paragraph and asked to write one or two sentences to capture the main idea of the text. What is worth noting here is that the

way in which summarizing was conceptualized and practiced in the Chinese lessons was quite different from what is commonly expected in the English academic context. As is revealed from the participants' descriptions, summarizing was not assigned as a writing task. Instead, it was used as a way to assess students' ability to comprehend a particular text in Chinese; in other words, it was a reading task. According to the students, what they typically did to complete such summarizing tasks in reading comprehension tests was to identify key words and phrases in the original text related to the main idea and then compose a sentence or two using these expressions (in a sense, this practice is quite similar to patchwriting). Because of the emphasis on reading comprehension, the students' summaries were evaluated based on their ability to identify the gist of a text instead of how well their summaries were written. Therefore, Coco's and Lucia's reference to summarizing in their translations of *paraphrasing* is not as appropriate as it may sound.

Helen, Wendy and Roger all focused on the explanatory power of paraphrasing when translating the term, although the three terms that they came up with were slightly different in meaning. These translations seemed to have captured one important purpose of paraphrasing, which is to explain a text in a clearer way; nevertheless, the three students' explanations about their translations suggested that their understanding of paraphrasing was still rather different from what is expected in the English academic context. When asked why she translated *paraphrasing* in this particular way, Helen referred to her previous experiences of taking general English tests in college in China. According to her, one section of these tests was paraphrasing, for which students were

asked to explain a difficult passage taken from a text. In this sense, paraphrasing was used as an assessment tool to test students' reading comprehension in English. Sharing a similar experience, Wendy thought that paraphrasing was similar to interpreting, except that for paraphrasing, she needed to use the same language to explain the meaning of a text. As she recalled in the interview, one of her English teachers in China had introduced the term paraphrasing in class. This English teacher would often choose a difficult sentence or two taken from the reading materials and ask the students to orally paraphrase them. In this case, paraphrasing was employed as a form of informal assessment to check whether the class was able to understand key vocabulary, colloquial expressions and complex sentence structures, and to monitor students' level of language proficiency. Although Helen and Wendy were not completely new to the word paraphrasing at the beginning of the writing course under study, as many of their classmates were, their understanding of paraphrasing based on earlier literacy experiences would probably not bring them much help as they started learning paraphrasing as a writing technique.

Roger also thought that the paraphrasing was done mainly for the purpose of explaining certain information. Unlike Helen and Wendy, Roger believed that this particular practice gave people the freedom to interpret a text based on their own opinions. As he put it, "You can paraphrase a text in whatever way you feel appropriate for your own writing. There is no wrong paraphrase. You can do it in your own way." (Interview, 10/24/2011) As the quote reveals, Roger thought that paraphrasing was a rather free act, not subject to any fixed evaluative criteria. Although this understanding of paraphrasing that emphasizes the explanatory power of the skill would be beneficial for

Roger to work with source texts, it is also likely to get him into trouble given the relatively strict standards imposed on paraphrasing in the English academic context.

The last translation in Table 3, imitating and writing, was offered by Jack. According to him, paraphrasing entailed the act of imitating, with the purpose of resembling the way in which the original author of a text presented certain information. As Jack explained in the interviews, when taking Chinese lessons at school in China, he was required to read a number of literary texts and asked to imitate the elegant writing style of highly regarded authors. Although imitation is certainly an important strategy for L2 writers to use when learning English academic writing, equating paraphrasing with imitating the writing style may limit how learners interact with source texts and utilize them for their own purposes in academic writing.

As is shown across the nine cases, these novice L2 writers were holding specific assumptions about paraphrasing as they began learning about this culturally rooted skill in the academic writing course under study. They were not blank slates, an important point for L2 writing teachers to understand when introducing paraphrasing. Many of these assumptions were based on their earlier literacy experiences in China, both in Chinese and English. Although each of the participants was able to come up with a Chinese translation for the English term *paraphrasing*, they all acknowledged in the interviews that it was difficult for them to decide on a translation because there did not seem to be one clear-cut concept in Chinese that exactly corresponded to *paraphrasing*. Understandably, they relied on their previous knowledge and experiences in order to

produce a translation that they believed to best represent the meaning of *paraphrasing*. In other words, they had a schema to work with.

4.4.2 Why paraphrase?

As the participants attempted to learn paraphrasing in the academic writing course, their previous knowledge and literacy experiences (or schema) inevitably came into play. Not only did they find it difficult to fully understand the term *paraphrasing*; they also encountered major challenges as they tried to make sense of why they were asked to paraphrase and what constituted effective and appropriate paraphrasing. Although the students were frequently asked to practice paraphrasing throughout the course, their confusion about the purposes of paraphrasing as well as the fluid evaluation criteria remained until the end of the term. What was missing for them was a clear understanding or acceptance of the *need* for paraphrasing in academic English.

New to the concept of paraphrasing and of source-based writing in general, the participants of the study struggled to understand the reasons for the practice of paraphrasing. To them, paraphrasing was just another language exercise imposed on them, an exercise that came with unreasonably high requirements. When asked why they thought paraphrasing was taught as an important skill in the academic writing course that they were taking, all nine participants stated that avoiding plagiarism was the primary reason. Out of all the topics covered in the writing class, plagiarism was definitely one that left a lasting impression on the students. As they were introduced to the various situations that would be considered plagiarism in the context of English academic writing as well as the severe consequences associated with plagiarism, the novice L2 writers felt

quite intimidated. Avoiding plagiarism, therefore, became the top priority for these students as they worked on the research paper assignments. As Jack explained in one of the interviews, “My primary goal is to avoid plagiarism, because if I am caught, I am dead. Compared with this, the quality of my papers doesn’t matter that much.” (Interview, 10/23/2011) With this intimidation factor at play, the participants felt constrained as they interacted with their sources, and naturally they understood paraphrasing as a tool to stay away from plagiarism. This made the notion of avoiding paraphrasing altogether and relying instead on direct quotation all the more appealing to them, as discussed elsewhere in this chapter.

What is interesting to note here, however, is that the participants also complained about the challenges that they encountered using paraphrasing to achieve the purpose of avoiding plagiarism. As they practiced paraphrasing and learned about the general criteria used to evaluate the quality of a paraphrase, the students realized that paraphrasing could actually lead to the accusation of plagiarism. All the participants mentioned that they were surprised to learn that they could be accused of plagiarism if their paraphrases contained more than three words consecutively from the source texts. For these novice L2 writers, this was not an easy goal to accomplish, as they were constantly struggling to find alternatives to replace the original wording. Jack, for example, expressed his frustration in one of the interviews: “I don’t think I am able to change every word in my source texts, and sometimes I feel that it is the only way to say something. But the problem is, if I keep it in my paraphrase, I can be accused of plagiarism”. (Interview, 10/23/2011) On the one hand, Jack was concerned that changing certain words and

expressions in his paraphrases would twist the meaning of the source information; on the other hand, he was worried that not making those changes would cause him to be accused of plagiarism. Weighing the severity of the consequences, Jack eventually decided to make as many linguistic changes as possible when he had to paraphrase, just to be on the safe side. Jack's case was quite representative across the participants, who all struggled between being faithful to the source text material and avoiding plagiarism. Attempting to strike a balance between taking risks (paraphrasing) and avoiding risks (plagiarism), the participants, understandably, did not direct much of their attention to the rhetorical functions associated with paraphrasing.

Another point worth noting here is the participants' cultural upbringing with respect to plagiarism. In the Chinese educational system they were raised in, plagiarism does not seem to be an issue, and the students were not taught about plagiarism explicitly. Chinese education, and in fact Chinese culture, operates on an entirely different notion of the ownership of texts and ideas, as Bloch (2001) has explained. For instance, the words and ideas taken from famous classical texts and used in students' essays in Chinese are so well-known within the culture that there is no perceived need to indicate where they came from. In fact, part of the value of citing classical texts in Chinese writing lies in the reader's ability to recognize them as classics written by ancient authors. Judged from a Western standard, such a citation practice is inappropriate, as it lacks clear attribution; yet, in the system of Chinese writing, this practice is legitimate in that it functions on the basis of the writer's and the reader's mutual understanding about the origins of the cited information. In a sense, attribution is invisible and unnecessary because it is already so

well established in the public's mind. The participants of the study were exposed to this different notion of textual appropriation in which there is no punishment for copying the words of others. If anything, copying without attribution, or with insufficient attribution, is an acceptable strategy. Therefore, the specter of danger and punishment associated with plagiarism as they were introduced to it in the academic writing course studied here was entirely new in their experience, and this may have made it even more intimidating for them. It constituted a significant cultural gap for them.

Although the feelings of intimation played an important role in drawing the participants' attention to the linguistic dimension of paraphrasing, a larger issue related to their limited understanding of the purposes of paraphrasing was their unfamiliarity with source-based writing in general. As the previous discussion has revealed, these Chinese students did not have substantial experiences of working with sources in English writing before they came to the U.S., and their understanding of how to use source information based on their Chinese writing experiences was not quite consistent with the expectations in the English academic context. In their minds, using sources was all about quoting famous sayings and well-known lines from classic poems, for which they did not need to interact with the source texts that much. With such a background, the participants of the study experienced a hard time fully grasping the purposes of using sources for their research paper writing and developed a rather superficial understanding of the role that source texts played in their writing.

When asked how they understood the reasons why they were required to use sources for their research paper assignments, all nine participants stated that source

information would help to support their own ideas, which were developed in a rather random manner. Instead of reading source texts on their chosen topic and then generating possible key points for their research papers, the participants would first work out an outline where they listed the major points that they planned to cover in their papers. As for how they decided on what points they considered worth discussing in their papers, the participants explained that it was a matter of personal choice. Helen, for example, explicitly stated in one of the interviews, “Isn’t this my paper? So I can write whatever I want, obviously.” (Interview, 11/29/2011) Chuck expressed a similar belief: “I just want to tell the readers what I think of this topic, actually.” (Interview, 12/7/2011)

With such an idea in mind, the participants decided on the points that they wanted to cover in their papers long before they read any source texts. The source texts, which ideally would help the students develop a comprehensive and well-grounded understanding of their chosen topic, did not play any role in informing their thinking during the prewriting stage. They performed a strictly functional role. It was not until they started writing their papers that the participants turned to the library databases and searched for relevant sources. At this point, with a complete outline in hand, the students would look only for source text material that was consistent with what they had planned to talk about in their papers. If they came across a source that they believed to be offering opposing views to theirs, then they would simply discard the source. Although it is certainly important for the students to express their opinions in their research papers, the way in which they searched for and used source texts defied the purpose of writing a research paper in the first place. Without a meaningful and active interaction with the

source material at the beginning stage of the writing process where they were supposed to be brainstorming and developing ideas, what the participants produced was in fact personal response essays disguised in the genre of research papers.

Because of the participants' belief that they should only incorporate source information that was consistent with their own points, they did not see the necessity of interacting with sources, as is expected in the English academic context. Instead of synthesizing the information presented in multiple texts, the students would read through each individual source and pick out sentences that they believed directly supported their claims. Most often, the participants would incorporate one source at a time, without making any connections between different sources. They had no concept of, or no desire to engage in, synthesizing, which is another important tool in source-based writing. In this sense, the students did not examine their sources critically or analytically. This particular way of working with sources naturally led them to the conclusion that paraphrasing was not that useful in presenting source information and that direct quoting was more effective. Chuck, for example, explicitly expressed his confusion about the necessity of paraphrasing in one of the interviews. According to him, the purpose of incorporating source information was to show readers that there were scholars who published on a particular topic, and using direct quotes would not only accurately present the information, but also establish the credibility of the source. As he put it, "If we are already using somebody else's information, why do we have to change the wording? We should keep the wording to give credit to the original authors." (Interview, 12/7/2011) In

other words, he did not see the point of paraphrasing. To him, paraphrasing was just "a legitimized form of plagiarism." (Interview, 12/7/2011)

As is shown in this section, the novice L2 writers in this study struggled to understand the concept of paraphrasing and the functions that it could achieve in their writing. Coming from a rhetorical and cultural background where there does not seem to exist a concept equivalent to paraphrasing, the participants found it difficult to grasp what paraphrasing was and why they were expected to engage in such an activity. To them, the primary function of paraphrasing was to avoid plagiarism. This rather narrow understanding of paraphrasing inevitably prevented the participants from using this skill to its full potential. A larger issue worth noting here is the participants' unfamiliarity with source-based writing in general. Although they were able to complete the research paper assignments eventually, the participants did not fully engage with the source texts as they were expected to, and their relationship with the source texts was rather superficial.

4.5 The Cultural Gap between the Teaching and Learning of Paraphrasing

As is revealed in the previous sections, the novice L2 writers in this study encountered major challenges as they attempted to decipher the culturally rooted practice of paraphrasing, negotiating between their previous literacy experiences and the new expectations in the context of English academic writing. Apart from this, the students also had to negotiate with the local culture of the classroom, where the instructor held certain culturally specific assumptions that the students did not share. In this section, I will discuss the gap that I observed in the classroom between the teaching and learning of paraphrasing, seeking to unveil the missing element of culture in the classroom setting.

4.5.1 The relationship between paraphrasing and source-based writing.

In the two interviews that I conducted with the instructor, she emphasized the importance of integrating source information into one's own paper through the use of quoting, summarizing and paraphrasing. To her, paraphrasing was not an isolated skill; rather, it functioned as one of the tools that would enable a writer to effectively weave source information into his/her writing. As she clearly explained in the end interview,

> I was more concerned with them putting together a comprehensive paragraph based on one piece of evidence…. I wanted the focus not to be on paraphrasing skills or quoting skills, but rather on putting the rest of the ingredients around it. (Interview, 12/5/2011)

This conceptualization of paraphrasing, for some reason, was never explicitly explained and discussed in class. It seemed that the students were expected to either share this idea or develop a similar understanding themselves later on. Unfortunately, the students did not share such an understanding. To them, paraphrasing was an end product itself, which entailed linguistically dissembling and reassembling a sentence or two. Wendy, for example, conceptualized paraphrasing largely as a linguistically-oriented activity that would enable her to learn more about academic writing style. Conscious of her non-native writing style and lack of formal vocabulary, Wendy regularly expressed her admiration of the source texts that she was reading and explained that she would intentionally keep certain terms and sentence structures taken from the texts in her paraphrases as a way to practice using those unfamiliar expressions. When paraphrasing, Wendy would identify new words and phrases that she believed to represent a higher level of linguistic proficiency. To her, the process of linguistically manipulating source texts enabled her to observe the stylistic differences between experienced academic

writers and herself. Therefore, she perceived paraphrasing as a linguistic exercise rather than as a tool that could be used to achieve larger rhetorical purposes in her writing. As an avid learner, Wendy's efforts at learning from the writing style of her source texts were certainly admirable; yet, her conceptualization of paraphrasing as a linguistic operation prevented her from interacting with the content of the source texts in a meaningful way. Wendy's case was quite representative of all the nine participants, who demonstrated the tendency of viewing paraphrasing from a mechanistic perspective. To them, manipulating language was all that paraphrasing entailed. In this sense, these novice L2 writers learned the dots, but not how to connect them into a line.

As Macbeth (2010) has vividly described, in Anglophone academic writing courses, what she calls a "cultural curriculum," which is developed based on the assumptions about academic writing shared by members of the academic community, is often at play. The instructors of such courses are usually experienced academic readers and writers familiar with these cultural assumptions, and to them, these assumptions may appear transparent because of this familiarity. Novice L2 writers, however, are from a different cultural background and do not share these assumptions underlying such common writing tasks as paraphrasing. As "cultural novices and academic newcomers" (Macbeth, 2006, p. 182), the participants in the study encountered cultural hurdles while experimenting with the unfamiliar task of paraphrasing. As was discussed earlier, the Chinese participants were brought up in a culture that holds a different view of how sources function in writing, and they were unfamiliar with the conventions and expectations associated with source-based writing in English academic writing and the

role that paraphrasing plays. Lacking the cultural resources and tools necessary to demystify the instructor's requirements and the "cultural curriculum" (Macbeth, 2010) in which those requirements were embedded, the participants were unable to see how the skill of paraphrasing would help them construct better research papers. In their eyes, paraphrasing was just another linguistic exercise assigned for them to practice English. In this sense, the participants had lost the forest for the trees, with the forest being the real set of purposes for paraphrasing and the trees representing the linguistic procedures attached to it.

4.5.2 The criteria used to evaluate the quality of a paraphrase.

An important focus of the teaching of paraphrasing in the writing class was on the criteria used to evaluate the quality of a paraphrase. According to the instructor, students needed to develop the ability to effectively assess whether their paraphrases were appropriate or not so that they could monitor their own paraphrasing practices in future writing. In class, the instructor introduced to the students the following guidelines as general evaluative criteria.

1. Retain the original meaning
2. It should come across as your own wording
3. Copy no more than 3/4 words in a row from the original source
4. Refer back to the writer/source
5. Cite your source
6. Maintain approximately the same length as the original (Field notes, 10/3/2011)

From the perspective of the instructor, these criteria were quite self-explanatory. It was probably because of this assumption that in her feedback the instructor would refer to these guidelines without offering any further explanations. For example, when

commenting on the content of the students' paraphrases, the instructor would use such phrases as "change in meaning," "slight change in meaning," "excellent," "good,' "OK," etc. to evaluate the level of faithfulness of the paraphrase. For the instructor who was familiar with academic writing in English, these evaluative comments clearly marked the different levels of success of students' paraphrases. In the eyes of the novice L2 writers, however, these seemingly self-evident phrases were rather vague and caused major confusion on their part. As the participants explained in the interviews, they found it difficult to use these criteria to evaluate their own paraphrases, in that they were often unsure about what constituted an accurate representation of the meaning of source texts. Although this feeling of uncertainty had to do with the participants' developing reading comprehension proficiency, a more important factor that led them to this feeling was the inconsistency between their own evaluation of the paraphrases and the instructor's assessment. Seven out of the nine participants explained that they sometimes could not understand the instructor's feedback that evaluated their paraphrases as inaccurate. To them, their paraphrases were quite faithful. Jack, for example, expressed his confusion in one of the interviews.

> I never seem to know whether my paraphrases retain the meaning of the source texts. Sometimes I thought my paraphrase had exactly the same meaning as the original source, but the instructor would tell me that the meaning changed. I would then look at my paraphrase over and over again, but still could not figure out why it was considered unfaithful. (Interview, 12/2/2011)

As this quote shows, Jack felt rather insecure about his own evaluation of his paraphrases, as it sometimes differed from the instructor's assessment. As a result, Jack concluded that he was not in the right position to evaluate his own paraphrases. Vera

shared Jack's opinion. According to her, no matter how hard she tried to paraphrase, she was never certain about how the instructor would evaluate her paraphrases. As she recalled in the end-of-term interview,

> I am not quite sure what kind of paraphrasing is generally considered faithful. Sometimes, I worked really hard and thought that my paraphrase was really good, but then the teacher said my paraphrase changed the meaning. Other times, I felt I wasn't sure if I understood the source text, but the teacher would give me a comment like 'good'." (Interview, 11/30/2011)

In Vera's mind, the criteria used to evaluate the faithfulness of a paraphrase was quite fluid, and she was never sure as to whether her own paraphrases satisfied the criteria. The following example serves as a case in point.

> **Original**: "Though most people are accustomed to, and generally agree upon large-scale efforts to highlight public health issues such as smoking and obesity, there is little or no effort to combat the effects that stress has on chronic disease." (Kaufer & Francis, 2011, p. 69)
>
> **Vera's paraphrase**: Majorities are conditional to and universally accept the notion that diseases are ascribed to public health issues like smoking. However, people struggled to deny that chronic ailments are largely affected by stress (Kaufer & Francis, 2011, p. 69)

The instructor evaluated Vera's paraphrase as "slight change in meaning." In her written feedback, the instructor did not specify which part of the paraphrase was not faithful compared with the original source. In the end-of-term inteview where the instructor was asked to explain why she gave Vera this particicular comment, she said:

> First part kind of throws me a little bit, "accept the notion that diseases are ascribed to public health issues", the focus seems to be more on the disease aspect of it rather than the large scale public health related…it didn't seem to match up as well as it could have with what was there. Yeah, the focus seems to be more on the disease nature, rather than the effort. (Interview, 12/5/2011)

As this quote reveals, the instructor thought that Vera's paraphrase was not as faithful as it could be because of the part, "accept the notion that diseases are ascribed to public health issues". According to the explanations of the instructor, the focus of the source text was clearly on the unbalanced efforts devoted to public health issues and the disease related to stress. Therefore, Vera's paraphrase, which emphasized the reason for the public health issues instead of the efforts to battle against these issues, was not accurate. Vera, however, was not aware of this shift of emphasis in her paraphrase. When asked to speculate the reasons why the instructor gave her the comment "slight change in meaning," Vera said that she was not sure and that she believed that her paraphrase was quite faithful as she tried her best to follow the structure of the source text (Interview, 11/30/2011).

As shown in this example, the instructor had certain assumptions in mind when providing feedback for the students' paraphrases. She probably expected that students receiving the comment of "change in meaning" or "slight change in meaning" would be able to identify the parts of their paraphrses that were not faithful to the original texts. From the novice L2 writers' perspective, however, this expectation was difficult to meet. On the one hand, they were likely to struggle to comprehend the source texts written in an academic style; on the other hand, they found it chanllenging to evaluate the extent to which their choice of wording accurately represented the source information. As a result, the instructor's feedback, which ideally would help the students improve their understanding of what constituted successful paraphrases, served to confuse these novice L2 writers, making paraprhasing an even more myterious activity.

Not only did the participants find it challenging to fully understand the instructor's comments on their short paraphrasing exercises, they also encountered difficulties following her feedback about their paraphrases in their research papers. One major area that the instructor focused on in her feedback for the students' paraphrases in research papers was the extent to which they explained the paraphrased information. From her perspective, paraphrasing should be used strategically to help develop the students' own points in their papers. Given this purpose, the instructor believed that effective explanations and analysis that followed the paraphrases would help the reader understand the source inforamtion and make the connection between the paraphrased information and the students' claims. As the instructor explained in an interview, "And paraphrasing, again, you may have a number of different ideas that you are working with, and you are showing your understanding of the information, and interweaving it into your paper as well" (Interview, 12/5/2011). According to the instructor, students often struggled to offer sufficient explanations for their paraphrases in their research papers, assuming that the reader would be able to understand why certain information was incorporated into their papers. Therefore, she often wrote on the margins of the students' papers that more explanations were needed for their paraphrases.

Reasonable as this comment was, the novice L2 writers in the study found it extremely challenging to follow this feedback and add explanations. All nine participants stated that they were uncertain about the extent to which explanations should be offered in relation to their paraphrases. As Lucia stated in one of the interviews, "The biggest difficulty is to connect the paraphrased information with my points. I thought that my

paraphrases were already explaining what the source texts were saying, but the teacher said that more explanations were needed. I am not sure what else to explain" (Interview, 12/3/2011). Coco shared a similar confusion, "Most often I think I have explained everything in the paraphrase, and if I add anything else, I feel that the added explanations are just repeating the paraphrase" (Interview, 10/17/2011). New to English academic writing, the participants struggled to understand what such concepts as "explain" and "analyze" entailed. These basic concepts, which are often taken for granted by experienced academic writers, were not discussed in class. Then, too, given their cultural background, the students may have conceptualized the reading audience differently than the instructor intended and worked on different assumptions about how much, and how directly, readers need to be told what is going on in a text. Consequently, the students were left alone to guess what these concepts meant. Their understanding as outsiders of the academic community naturally differed from that of the insiders.

Here the distinction between reader-responsible and writer-responsible texts (Hinds, 1987) is particularly relevant to explaining the gap between the instructor's expectations and the students' practices. Hinds (1987) has presented the idea that students from Asian backgrounds write from what he calls a "reader-responsible" orientation in which it is believed that it is the reader's job, not the writer's, to make connections within texts. For the writer to do so would suggest that readers are incapable of establishing connections on their own, an idea that is unacceptable in Asian rhetorics. He contrasts this with what he sees as the Western-oriented "writer-responsible" framework in which it is the writer's responsibility to make connections for readers, even when the

connections may seem self-evident. Coming from a Chinese rhetorical and cultural background, the participants in this study may have constructed an understanding of paraphrasing from a reader-responsible position and thus saw no need to make connections that, from their perspective, were obvious. From the Chinese perspective, to do so would in effect insult the intelligence of readers, something the students were perhaps unwilling to do.

4.6 Summary

As is discussed in this section, the novice L2 writers in this study carried with them substantial cultural schema as they started learning the culturally rooted skill of paraphrasing and source-based writing. Their literacy background in Chinese writing and limited experiences with English writing in China influenced how they understood the practice of paraphrasing and the purposes of engaging in this activity. Coming from a culture where there does not seem to be a term equivalent to paraphrasing, and where direct quoting is generally considered as a preferred way of incorporating sources, and where no stigma is attached to citing classical works with insufficient attribution of sources, these Chinese students found it difficult to fully grasp what the term *paraphrasing* meant and why they were expected to paraphrase. In addition, their limited writing experiences in English resulted in their general unfamiliarity with source-based writing, which added to the challenges that the participants experienced as they attempted to make sense of the reasons for paraphrasing. Their understanding of paraphrasing and source-based writing thus remained rather superficial. Despite the instructor's efforts to explain the concept of paraphrasing and why it was an important skill to master, her

instruction was not as well received as expected due to the gap between her assumptions as an insider of the academic community and what the students actually knew as outsiders.

The analysis of how various levels of culture intersected with each other in the teaching and learning of paraphrasing demonstrates the value-laden nature of academic socialization and the interactions between insiders and outsiders of the academic community. The seemingly simple practice of paraphrasing is indeed not a neutral activity, although members of the academia may take it for granted and assume that it is a clear-cut and straightforward task. When learning to paraphrase, novice L2 writers are essentially expected to think, read and write in a particular way that is shared by experienced academic writers. Their struggles with paraphrasing, therefore, are first and foremost cultural. As they engage in the strange practice of paraphrasing, these novice L2 writers are in essence attempting to demystify the cultural codes and hidden values attached to the practice. Their efforts, expectedly, are not always successful, given their limited cultural resources as novice academic writers who are unfamiliar with source-based writing in English and at the same time second language learners who carry with them significant cultural schema as related to textual appropriation developed in their native language. Struggling between the different levels of cultures when learning to paraphrase, the novice L2 writers in this study seemed to have created a "learner interculture" that guided their actual paraphrasing practices and that enabled them to complete the demanding paraphrasing tasks. Similar to the concept of interlanguage (Selinker, 1972), the "learner interculture" is a dynamic cultural system that reflects

novice L2 writers' attempts to shuttle between what they know (their L1 literacy experiences about textual appropriation), what they think they know (their developing and limited knowledge about paraphrasing) and what they are expected to know (the conventions associated with paraphrasing in English academic writing). This appears to be an important feature of novice L2 academic writers' socialization experiences.

Chapter 5: "Dancing on the Edge": Novice L2 Writers' Engagement with Paraphrasing Within the Linguistic Dimension

The linguistic aspect of paraphrasing has normally been a primary focus of teaching as a way of helping L2 writers avoid plagiarism, a major form of academic misconduct which can lead to serious consequences. The belief is that L2 writers must learn not to simply copy, especially without appropriate attribution, the words found in source texts. It is also used as a way of assessing students' reading and writing skills, either separately or in combination, since a successful paraphrase is partly a matter of how well a student has read and understood the original source sentence and partly how s/he is able to recreate it through writing. Thus, in a typical L2 writing course, the concept of paraphrasing is often operationalized as the linguistic manipulation of wording, with regular exercises provided for L2 writers to practice changing the wording of a sentence or two while maintaining the meaning. Beneficial as it is in familiarizing L2 writers with the common expectations of good paraphrasing, such a conceptualization of paraphrasing represents a rather simplistic view of the practice, neglecting the rhetorical and cultural aspects inherent in paraphrasing and inappropriately treating it as a neutral activity.

In this chapter, I will describe the linguistic negotiation that the L2 writers experienced as they attempted to paraphrase a short paragraph taken from their readings. This was earlier in the course, as they were being prepared for the longer writing assignments that would soon follow. As an integral component of the writing curriculum which aims to help second language writers to develop academic writing proficiency needed in the university context, paraphrasing was taught and practiced throughout the 10-week course that was the study's research site. As shown in previous chapters, that course emphasized source-based writing. After being introduced to the general concept of paraphrasing at the beginning of the course, students were regularly assigned short paraphrasing exercises where they were expected to paraphrase a sentence or a short paragraph taken from their assigned readings. In these exercises, students devoted most of their efforts to linguistically manipulating sentence structures, word forms and synonyms in order to produce paraphrases that would ideally "mean the same, but look completely different," one important criterion introduced in the course packet to evaluate the quality of a paraphrase. In fact, such short exercises are commonly assigned in many academic writing courses as manageable and focused tasks for L2 writers to practice paraphrasing. Therefore, it is essential to examine the lived experiences of novice L2 academic writers as they approach such exercises for a better understanding of the learning and socialization processes associated with paraphrasing.

5.1 Linguistic Features of Learners' Paraphrases in Short Exercises

New to the challenging task of paraphrasing, L2 writers' paraphrases often exhibit linguistic features that result from their unfamiliarity with the notion of paraphrasing, the

fact that they are still learning the target language itself, and their best efforts to produce academically appropriate paraphrases based on their understanding of the concept of textual appropriation. In this section of the chapter, I will portray four major features of the participants' paraphrases of short paragraphs taken from their course readings. These four features will be presented in two contrasting pairs, seeking to highlight the demanding and complex nature of paraphrasing and L2 learners' decision making as they engaged the assigned tasks. The focus of the linguistic analysis is not on grammatical accuracy, considering the developmental nature of language learning in general; rather, the four features presented here are ones that vividly demonstrate L2 writers' active engagement with paraphrasing tasks.

5.1.1 Feature one: Simplified and informal vocabulary.

Already documented in previous research (e.g. Campbell, 1990), one prominent feature of L2 students' paraphrases is a downgraded level of linguistic complexity, most likely due to their insufficient knowledge of the academic register as well as limited academic vocabulary. In the interviews, all participants expressed their frustration with looking for words that they could use to explain source texts. As Jack said, "English is not my native language, and it's already not easy for me to know one way to say something. Now I am expected to know two and more ways to say the same thing, which I think is unrealistic." (Interview, 10/23/2011) Most of the participants shared the belief that the original sentences, which were produced by expert academic writers, already contained the most appropriate wording and therefore were difficult, if not impossible, to rewrite. Faced with these obstacles, which to them were insurmountable, these novice L2

writers had to make the most out of their existing linguistic repertoire to try to convey the message originally delivered with, in Wendy's words, "elegant language." Their paraphrases, perhaps not surprisingly, were filled with simplistic sentence structures, and informal and low-level expressions.

In the eyes of an experienced academic writer, the paraphrases produced by these L2 learners are likely to be evaluated as "bad paraphrases" which lack linguistic complexity. However, from a developmental perspective, these paraphrases vividly mark the beginning stages of the learning trajectories of novice L2 writers, who actively negotiate between their developing English proficiency and the unfamiliar expectations associated with paraphrasing and source-based writing in general. It is thus important for L2 writing instructors and researchers to explore this negotiation process in order to help learners move forward, especially the conundrum faced by L2 writers, who see the original text as already so well-written that it cannot be improved upon. To have to rephrase what, in their mind and with their still developing linguistic repertoire, is already in top shape is a challenge necessary but not easy for L2 writing instructors to understand, particularly if English is their native language.

An examination of some student attempts at paraphrasing sheds light on the issues and struggles faced by the participants. For example, when paraphrasing the sentence "If humans are to succeed as a species, our collective shame over destroying other life-forms should grow in proportion to our understanding of their various ecological roles" (Jacquet, 2011, p. 140), Roger struggled to identify appropriate alternatives to replace the key verb "destroy." In the think-aloud, he spent quite some time brainstorming possible

options that could fit here, and eventually came up with the verbs “kill” and “crush.” Although he was not satisfied with the two options, as he believed that “killing or crushing other life-forms sounds too oral,” he still decided to use the two new verbs in his paraphrase just to complete the task. As he explained in the think-aloud, he was well aware that the words he used were not at the same level as those in the original source sentence, but he “had to find a way to explain,” and between keeping the verb “destroy” and adopting the less formal ones “kill” and “crush,” he intentionally chose the latter because at least he was trying to make changes, which, in his understanding, captured the essence of paraphrasing. (Think-Aloud, 10/3/2011)

Also attempting to paraphrase the same sentence, Wendy encountered difficulties trying to use her own words to explain the part “If humans are to succeed as a species.: To her, the concept of human beings as a successful species was rather vague; therefore, she believed that it was necessary to insert some explanations in her paraphrase to help readers understand. As she went through the source sentence several times, Wendy realized that the phrase “ecological roles” in the latter part of the sentence provided a hint for her to elaborate on the idea of humans as a successful species. In the end, she decided to use the phrase “play a good ecological role” to explain the abstract adjective “successful,” as she believed that the former was specifying what the latter meant. Despite her confidence in the connections that she established between human beings as a successful species and the ecological roles that they should play, Wendy was frustrated by the quest to find a high-level adjective to modify the noun phrase “ecological role.” She knew that the word “good” was “not good at all,” in that “it is so common and

vague," but she was unable to locate a more satisfying alternative for her paraphrase. Right after she finished her think-aloud, Wendy came out of the room with a faint grimace on her face, declaring "I finished, but I feel that my paraphrase is like a dwarf, and the original sentence is a giant." (Think-Aloud, 10/6/2011)

A glance at the paraphrases produced by the nine participants instantly reveals some of the most common vocabulary possessed by these L2 writers. Such words as "good," "bad," and "thing" frequently stand out in their paraphrases. Although the learners were aware that these words did not sound academic, they were most often unable to identify alternatives that did. These novice writers, who were fresh out of their home country, China, and who had received little or no training in English academic writing, had limited formal vocabulary in English as they started learning paraphrasing. Nor did they have a term for paraphrasing or a concept of it in their native language and culture. Naturally, what they did as they attempted to complete the paraphrasing exercises was to use words that they knew to explain the source text material. Despite their keen awareness of the gap between their own wording and that of the original texts, these L2 writers struggled to find an effective way to narrow the gap given where they were on their developmental trajectory toward acquisition of various academic literacy skills and knowledge.

5.1.2 Feature two: "Big words" and excessively long sentence structures.

A second feature that characterizes the participants' paraphrases, which seems to be rather contradictory to the previous one, is the use of "big words" and excessively long sentence structures. These L2 writers regularly used "big words" in their paraphrases in

the attempt to achieve a more formal writing style. These "big words," as the participants called them, are usually synonyms that they located in dictionaries. When asked how they determined whether a certain synonym they chose was in fact a formal word, the students explained their one and only working criterion: if they did not already know the word, then it probably is a formal one.

To illustrate this approach, when paraphrasing the following text about neuroscience and decision making, Vera was impressed by the noun "incorporation" used in the original sentence.

> **Source text**: "Perhaps more important, the **incorporation** of neuroscience into the study of decision making may change how we define patterns of behavior. Rather than being labeled 'timid' or 'cautious', a person may be described as having elevated amygdala sensitivity, which implies greater risk aversion in some circumstances and greater loss aversion in others and so forth" (McClure, 2011, p. 124)

As she explained shortly after finishing the paraphrase, "this is exactly the difference between how I write and how an academic writer writes; if I were to write about the same thing, I would probably say 'the use of neuroscience', which sounds so childish." (Think-Aloud, 11/30/2011) Aware of the formality conveyed through the use of the abstract noun "incorporation," Vera tried her best to find a synonym that ideally would enable her to maintain the formal register in her paraphrase. She used the dictionary function on her smart phone to check for synonyms and also searched on-line for possible candidates. Eventually, she decided to use the noun "conjunction," and her paraphrase goes:

> **Vera's paraphrase**: What's more important is when we look into the study of decision determination, the format of certain behavior may be altered by the **conjunction** of neuroscience".

When asked how she decided on this particular word, Vera said "'conjunction' seems a long word, so it must be very formal." (Think-Aloud, 11/30/2011)

Also working with the same source text, Jack devoted his attention to identifying synonymous adjectives that he could use to replace "timid" and "cautious" in the second sentence. He checked an electronic dictionary, and finally decided to use the word "prissy." When asked how he chose this adjective among the numerous options that he obtained from the dictionary, Jack said: "I've never seen this word before, which probably means it's a really formal one." (Think-Aloud, 11/29/2011)

What is interesting about Vera's and Jack's cases is that both of them, representative of all the participants, were aware of the need to use formal vocabulary in their paraphrases and did attempt to select synonyms that to the best of their knowledge conveyed the formal style of the source text. In fact, both students were proud of their choices, and it did not seem to occur to them that apart from choosing a word that *looks* or *sounds* formal, they should also check the meaning of the synonym to make sure that it *is* indeed formal and truly effective in capturing the same information expressed in the source information. As outsiders of Anglophone academia whose distance from the center was still rather far at the time of the study, these international undergraduate students were trying their best to imitate expert academic writers in a way that they believed to be effective. This approach was another example of their developmental trajectory as they negotiated the demands of academic expression in another language. The strategy they adopted was, developmentally speaking, the best they could employ at that point in time.

Not only did the participants use “big words” in their paraphrases, but they also at times attempted to produce paraphrases in excessively long and complicated sentence structures, a feature that in their opinion characterized academic writing. Although such attempts reflected these novice writers’ awareness of following the so-called academic style, their efforts often resulted in compromised clarity of meaning. For example, Wendy, who frequently expressed her dissatisfaction with her “simplistic language,” consciously utilized long sentence structures in her paraphrases. When working on the following source text, she deliberately forced herself to use one sentence to paraphrase the information originally explained in two long sentences.

> **Source text**: “if humans are to succeed as a species, our collective shame over destroying other life-forms should grow in proportion to our understanding of their various ecological roles. Maybe the same attention to one another that promoted our own evolutionary success will keep us from failing the other species in life’s fabric and, in the end, ourselves” (Jacquet, 2011, p. 140).
>
> **Wendy’s paraphrase**: Human being should have a feel of shame when destroying other species if we want to survive as a species and play a good ecological role, and pay the same attention to protect other species as our humans to avoid being destroyed by ourselves.

Her think-aloud protocol clearly demonstrated that she understood the original text quite well despite her uncertainty about the word “fabric.” (Think-Aloud, 10/6/2011) She was successful in identifying the main points of the two separate sentences in the source text. As she explained in the think-aloud, the first sentence is about the necessity for human beings to feel a sense of shame when destroying other species in the world, and the second sentence further emphasizes the importance of paying increased attention to ecological balance. However, when she tried to put her understanding in words, Wendy decided to include all the information in one grammatically complete sentence. Although

all the points were included in the paraphrase, the relationship between them was not clearly represented. In fact, it is quite difficult to tell whether the phrases "play a good ecological role" and "pay the same attention to protect other species as our humans" are parallel to "want to survive as a species" in the *if*-clause or "have a feel of shame" in the main clause. On the surface, the use of this long sentence helped Wendy to achieve an elevated language style preferred in academic writing; in essence, however, piling up all the information in one sentence without a skillful use of appropriate and effective connectors made the paraphrase less clear and more difficult to understand.

Also working on the same source text, Jack produced the following paraphrase for the first sentence in the source text (shown above in the example involving Wendy):

> **Jack's paraphrase**: Human being should double their shame while destroying other creatures along with improved knowledge in the necessity of their crucial ecological elements.

As shown by the think-aloud data, Jack spent quite some time looking for "an equally sophisticated sentence structure" to replace the structure of "in proportion to" used in the first sentence of the source paragraph. After brainstorming for about ten minutes, Jack decided to adopt the prepositional phrase "along with" in his paraphrase, a structure that he believed would make his sentence "long and complex." (Think-Aloud, 10/23/2011) Admirable as his attempt was in trying to maintain a formal style in his paraphrase, the part "along with improved knowledge in the necessity of their crucial ecological elements" seems rather vague in pointing out the relationship between "improved knowledge in the necessity of their crucial ecological elements" and "Human being should double their shame while destroying other creatures." In fact, the whole sentence

could be quite ambiguous, in that it is unclear as to whether the prepositional phrase "along with" is part of the inserted *while*-structure ("while destroying other creatures") or the main clause. It is interesting to note that at the beginning of his paraphrasing process when he was decoding the meaning of the original text, Jack used a simpler structure to help himself explain the main point of the first sentence:

> As we know more about the ecological roles of other creatures, we should have more feelings of shame to destroy them.

This version of his is certainly not the best paraphrase from the perspective of expert academic writers: the referent of the pronoun "we" is unclear, and the phrase "have more feelings of shame to destroy them" seems a little awkward. Yet, it does convey the meaning of the source text in a fairly concise and accurate manner. The reason why he decided not to use this version but the prepositional structure instead was because of his careful consideration of and best attempt at maintaining an academic style in his paraphrase. Unfortunately, however, he seemed to have sacrificed a clear expression of meaning for the so-called "fancy and elegant style".

As is shown in these examples, the participants in this study were trying their best to achieve a formal style in their paraphrases as they were expected to, although the outcomes were not always desirable. These examples reflect their current notion of academic writing in English. Attempting to make sense of the so-called academic writing style, these novice L2 writers relied on the linguistic differences that they were able to observe between their own writing and the source texts: the formal vocabulary and complex sentence structures. Aware of their limited language proficiency, the learners sought help from synonym dictionaries and other language resources. Such a

compensation strategy often backfired, as the learners overused the “big words” and complex sentence structures without considering the appropriateness or clarity. This kind of overcompensation could be another marker of their developmental path as L2 writers.

5.1.3 Feature three: Less concrete than source texts.

A third feature that characterizes these L2 writers’ paraphrases is the tendency to use generic words and expressions in their explanations of concrete and specific information. The source texts that they were reading were about the latest scientific discoveries in different fields. Although the authors all tried to tailor their writing to a general audience by simplifying the concepts and principles introduced in their essays, their writing still contains a considerable amount of field-specific terminology. While the use of these specific terms and expressions, which facilitates the authors’ explanations and helps to establish their authorial identity as experts, serves as an authentic example that demonstrates one important feature of academic writing, it also creates tremendous difficulties for these novice L2 writers to rephrase the same information in their own words. As Vera vividly explained: “If I use my own words, then I won’t use those terms because I don’t know the terms.” (Interview, 10/28/2011)

As an example of this, when working on the following short paragraph, Vera came up with a paraphrase that she believed to be “more like a summary,” as she was not sure how to include all the details that the original text contained in her own words.

> **Source text**: “One of the implications of these findings is that episodes of rejection or relationship dissolution can be just as damaging and debilitating as episodes of physical pain to the person experiencing them. Even though we may treat physical pain more seriously and regard it as the more valid ailment, the pain of social loss can be equally as distressing, as demonstrated by the activation of

> pain-related neural circuitry upon social disconnection" (Eisenberger, 2011, p. 182).
>
> **Vera's paraphrase**: One of the implications is that the loss of physical & social pain could be equally damaging and distressing even though they might not seem to be through the study.

Although the general topic of Vera's paraphrase remains similar to that of the original text (i.e. , the damaging nature of social loss as demonstrated by recent research), the level of specificity differs significantly. In the source text, not only did the author, Eisenberger, explain the abstract concept of "social loss" by providing two major types of experiences that fall under it, rejection and relationship dissolution, but she also pointed out the specific finding about "the activation of pain-related neural circuitry" that supports her major conclusion about the distressing nature of social loss. In Vera's paraphrase, by comparison, the term social pain was used directly without explanations or elaboration, and the specific research findings were reduced to the simple phrase "the study." In the think-aloud, Vera in fact expressed her doubt about the quality of her paraphrase, as she noticed that her paraphrase was much shorter than the original text. Yet, she was not sure how she could make her paraphrase more informative, as she believed that what she included in her paraphrase was already her best attempt at explaining the source information. As she put it, "I think I missed something in my paraphrase, but I don't know what it is." (Interview, 10/28/2011) An interesting point is Vera's assumption that if the paraphrase is shorter in length, it must be missing something from the original text. The possibility that her shorter paraphrase could convey all of the information in the original sentences had not occurred to her.

Also working on the same text, Coco devoted much of her time to identifying the key point conveyed in the original sentences. Her paraphrase turned out to be less concrete and specific than the source text.

> **Coco's paraphrase**: According to Naomi Eisenberger (2011), findings of social-physical pain show that rejection can hurt as same as physical pain.

The phrase "social-physical pain" is rather vague, which is likely to cause confusion to readers who are not familiar with the topic. Also, the information about the public's general misconception about treating physical pain as a more serious ailment and how pain-related neural circuitry is activated when a person experiences feelings of social loss is completely lost in the paraphrase. Like Vera, Coco also discussed her sense of insecurity in the think-aloud: "I feel this is not enough, but what else do I need to include?" To her, "the second sentence is the same as the first sentence," and therefore it is sufficient to paraphrase the first sentence only. (Interview, 10/17/2011)

The above examples illustrate how the novice L2 writers in the study attempted to work with source texts written by expert scholars who are also experienced academic writers. Reading their source texts, the participants all noticed the gap between what the authors knew and what they knew about the topics under discussion. While the source authors were displaying expertise in their writing with confidence, these novice L2 writers were only vaguely reporting what the expert scholars had to say about a particular topic. As Helen said, "I am not an expert on this topic, and I don't know the terms or concepts. All I can do is to tell readers a general idea in my paraphrases, and if they want to know more, they should read the source texts." (Interview, 10/25/2011) Even the best writer, Chuck, expressed his confusion about having to rephrase something he did not

fully understand. As he explained in the interviews, when reading source texts for research paper writing, he sometimes felt that he was only able to grasp the gist of a particular article and thus unable to maintain the specificity in his paraphrases. In such situations, he believed that what he produced was "something in-between paraphrasing and summarizing, something more like [one's] own explanations." (Interview, 11/10/2011) In this case, the participants' background or topic knowledge background became an important factor that prevented them from producing specific and concrete paraphrases. This experience of having to cope with unfamiliar subject matter in addition to linguistic issues adds another layer to the complexities associated with paraphrasing for L2 writers of academic English.

5.1.4 Feature four: Focus on linguistic details.

A fourth feature of the L2 writers' paraphrases, which seems rather contradictory to the third one about being overly general, is the inclusion of unnecessary linguistic details. New to the practice of paraphrasing, these novice L2 writers were sometimes unsure of how to distinguish between more important linguistic chunks and less important ones. As a result, they sometimes chose to paraphrase every single linguistic chunk that they saw in the original sentences, attempting to make their paraphrases as faithful to the source texts as possible without regard to the relative importance of different chunks of text. The following example involving Coco clearly illustrates this feature.

> **Source text**: "**Perhaps more important**, the incorporation of neuroscience into the study of decision making may change how we define patterns of behavior. Rather than being labeled 'timid' or 'cautious', a person may be described as having elevated amygdala sensitivity, which implies greater risk aversion in some

circumstances and greater loss aversion in others and so forth" (McClure, 2011, p. 124).

> **Coco's paraphrase**: **The more significant part** might be how neuroscience related to decision making may change our definition of behavior. We might say a person experienced amygdala sensitivity, which suggest higher risk aversion under some situations and higher loss aversion in future and others, instead of using 'timid' or 'cautious' to describe a person's decision making.

When working on the above source text, Coco started her paraphrase with the phrase "the more significant part," a clear attempt to maintain the information contained in the beginning part of the original sentence, "perhaps more important." As Coco explained in the think-aloud, "the word 'important' is a good indicator of the importance of this part." (Think-Aloud, 12/3/2011) In fact, however, the phrase "perhaps more important" functions as a transitional device in the original chapter as the author finishes discussing one potential consequence of studying decision making from the perspective of neuroscience and moves on to another. Although to a certain extent it does reflect the author's evaluation of the two consequences explained in the whole chapter (i.e., the second consequence is probably more important than the first one), the part "perhaps more important" is certainly not the most informative linguistic chunk in the original sentences which are to be paraphrased, as it does not actually discuss what the consequence is. Coco's paraphrase "the more significant part" is quite confusing, as it did not explain what "part" referred to here and what was being compared through the use of the comparative degree of "significant." In other words, despite her efforts to faithfully capture the meaning of the source text, the original purpose of the phrase "perhaps more important," which is to connect two adjacent paragraphs and to achieve coherence of longer writing, is actually lost in Coco's paraphrase.

Also working on the same source text, Vera struggled to decide what to include in her paraphrase of the second sentence, and here is what she produced after debating with herself about what was important and what was not.

> **Source text**: "…Rather than being labeled 'timid' or 'cautious', a person may be described as having elevated amygdala sensitivity, which implies greater risk aversion **in some circumstances** and greater loss aversion **in others and so forth**" (McClure, 2011, p. 124).
>
> **Vera's paraphrase**: An individual may be considered as having highly sensitive amygdala instead of being tagged as "shy" or "scrupulous", which indicate greater possibility to have risk aversion **in some situations** and loss aversion **in others and so on**.

In the source text, the phrases "in some circumstances" and "in others" are used by the author to contrast "risk aversion" and "loss aversion." The parallel structure, which highlights the contrast and helps the author achieve a stylistic effect in writing, does not convey much information in itself. Vera, however, believed that this parallel structure was somehow important, and needed to be kept in her paraphrase. Consequently, instead of devoting her attention to the more important content phrases of "risk aversion" and "loss aversion," Vera spent quite some time in the think-aloud trying to identify a possible alternative that she could use to represent this parallel structure in her paraphrase. She successfully changed "circumstances" into "situations," but was eventually admitted, in frustration, that "it was just impossible to change 'in others'". (Think-Aloud, 11/30/2011) As a result, she decided to leave "in others" as it was in her paraphrase. It is worth noting that at the end of the think-aloud, when Vera was explaining the challenges that she encountered in paraphrasing this particular text, she said "I think the source text has a lot of unnecessary phrases, but I think I need to keep

them in my paraphrase; otherwise, it would be a plain sentence written by me, with no style". (Think-Aloud, 11/30/2011)

In the source text, the ending part "and so forth" was used by the author to indicate that the example provided in the sentence about how neuroscientific terms instead of the common descriptors such as "timid" or "cautious" were used to describe personalities is just one case to illustrate the consequence of employing a neuroscientific perspective in the study of decision making. The phrase fits well in the original paragraph from which the sentences were taken, in that after this sentence which offers an example, the author continues to discuss the significance of neuroscience in a more general manner. Here is the next sentence.

> "The transition to neuroscientific terminology will be necessary once it is understood how various behaviors interrelate through brain function" (McClure, 2011, p. 124).

In this sense, the phrase "and so forth" helps the author to connect the specific example offered in the sentence with the more general statement that follows the example; yet, it actually provides little information in itself. Vera's attempt to paraphrase it as "and so on," therefore, seemed quite unnecessary. It is worth noting that Vera was not the only student who decided to paraphrase "and so forth"; four out of the nine participants attempted in one way or another to include this part in their paraphrases.

The third and fourth feature of the students' paraphrases, being overly general and unnecessarily specific, in fact vividly capture these novice academic writers' active attempts at the new and challenging task of paraphrasing. Their experiences with paraphrasing are probably not that different from novices learning to shoot a basketball.

In the beginning, it is inevitable that the new players will hit and miss most of the time, throwing the ball either too far or too near. As they continue practicing, the players will gradually develop a better sense of the distance between themselves and the goal as well as the appropriate strength and angle needed to score. What complicates the task of paraphrasing, however, is that the goal itself is not as clear as that in the game of basketball. Often, the novice L2 writers in the study found it difficult to picture a concrete end-product of paraphrasing which they were expected to produce, although the general criteria of good paraphrases were repeatedly discussed in course lectures. It is critical, therefore, for L2 writing instructors to adopt a developmental perspective when teaching paraphrasing. Rather than focus only on the paraphrasing products and assessing them as linguistically incompetent, L2 writing instructors need to dig deeper into these paraphrases and try to understand the active negotiation that has occurred behind the scenes. Only in this way can we identify the appropriate stage that the novice L2 writers are at on the developmental trajectory and provide concrete and appropriate instruction accordingly.

5.2 Strategies That Learners Used in Short Paraphrasing Exercises

As one of the major foci of the academic writing course, paraphrasing was taught and practiced throughout the term. The students were not only introduced to the concept of paraphrasing, but also provided with a list of strategies that they could use to produce appropriate and effective paraphrases. These strategies, such as using synonyms, changing word forms and sentence structures, are certainly not unique to this particular course; instead, they frequently appear in academic writing textbooks, which normally

contain sections about paraphrasing (though often very brief). These strategies tend to be conceptualized as concrete and manageable steps for learners to take to break down the abstract concept of paraphrasing, and are supposed to perform the magic trick which transforms L2 novice academic writers who are unfamiliar with paraphrasing into efficient paraphrasers. In reality, however, the story is much more complicated. A common question (and a fair one) which the participants of this study raised with regard to these strategies was *how to implement them*: how to identify a synonym, how to change word forms and sentence structures. To these learners, the strategies themselves were self-explanatory enough, but the implementation procedures were much less so. When using these strategies, the participants sometimes succeeded and other times stumbled, the experiences of which naturally added to their confusion about paraphrasing: "I changed the sentence structure, and I changed the words. Why is my paraphrase still not good?" In this section, I will describe how these novice L2 writers used the common strategies for paraphrasing to actually paraphrase, and present both successful and less successful cases where the strategies were employed, hoping to reveal L2 novice academic writers' negotiation with the seemingly simple and self-explanatory strategies at the linguistic level.

5.2.1 Strategy one: Using synonyms.

Using synonyms seems to be one of the most self-evident strategies for paraphrasing, and it was one of the most favored strategies among the participants of the study. As Jack declared in one of the interviews: "paraphrasing is all about using synonyms; otherwise, how can we make the original sentence look different?".

(Interview, 10/23/2011) Because of their confidence in this particular strategy, what many participants did when asked to paraphrase was to look up synonyms for all possible words in the source texts. Here are some of the successful examples where the students were able to adopt a synonym that conveyed the meaning of the original text and fit in the sentence structure of their paraphrase

> **Source text**: "…the incorporation of neuroscience into the **study** of decision making..." (McClure, 2011, p. 124)
>
> **Roger's paraphrase**: …the introduce of neuroscience into the **research** of decision making…
>
> **Source text**: "…which **implies greater** risk aversion in some **circumstances**…" (McClure, 2011, p. 124)
>
> **Coco's paraphrase**: …which **suggest higher** risk aversion under some **situations**…

The above two examples represent successful cases where the students effectively utilized the strategy of using synonyms in their paraphrases. In the first example, Roger used the noun "research" to replace "study" in the original source, the practice of which is consistent with many expert academic writers. In the second example, Coco used three synonyms in her paraphrase of the source text. The verb "suggest" is often used interchangeably with "imply" and "indicate," all of which convey a sense of indirectness; the adjective "higher" is an appropriate word to use to replace "greater" both in terms of meaning and register, and "situation" is an effective choice to refer to "circumstance." On the whole, the use of synonyms in these two cases facilitated Roger and Coco's attempts to maintain the meaning of the source texts while making as many changes as possible linguistically. Because of the appropriateness of their choice and use of synonyms,

readers who only read the paraphrases and not the source texts will probably not get the impression that the two students were making word-for-word changes.

Despite the student participants' confidence in using synonyms to change the wording of source texts, this strategy did not always work as they expected it to and sometimes backfired, making their paraphrases inaccurate and awkward-sounding. The following is one example where the use of a synonym fails to convey the meaning of the source text.

> **Source text**: "…our collective shame over destroying other life-forms should grow in proportion to our understanding of their various **ecological roles**…" (Jacquet, 2011, p. 140)
>
> **Helen's paraphrase**: …the shame on destroying other creatures' life should become an understanding of their different **life-styles**…

In this case, Helen tried to explain "ecological roles" and used "life-styles" as a synonym to replace the original phrase in the source text. Although the final choice of "life-styles" was a result of her careful thinking, as shown by the think-aloud data, the phrase does not carry a similar meaning as "ecological roles." In fact, readers who do not have access to the source text are likely to be confused by Helen's paraphrase and may never be able to connect the phrase "life-styles" with "ecological roles." In this case, the strategy of using synonyms did not achieve the effect that Helen expected it to.

Apart from inaccurately representing the meaning of the source text, the participants' unsuccessful implementation of the synonym replacement strategy also made their paraphrases sound rather awkward (e.g., Vera changed the phrase "decision making" into "decision determination" in her paraphrase). The following example is a case in point.

> **Source text**: “If humans are to succeed as a species, our collective shame over **destroying** other life-forms should grow in proportion to our understanding of their various ecological roles” (Jacquet, 2011, p. 140).
>
> **Lucia’s paraphrase**: Human’s common shame on **hurting** other forms of life should grow to think of their different roles in ecosystems, if human succeed as a species.

When paraphrasing the above source text, Lucia struggled to identify an appropriate synonym for the verb “destroy.” After brainstorming for quite some time, she decided to go with the verb “hurt.” Although “hurt” and “destroy” do share the meaning of causing damage or harm, the former is less serious in terms of degree and thus does not convey the meaning of the source, that is, making other life-forms extinct and ruining the ecological balance. In fact, when checking her own paraphrase after she finished, Lucia pointed this out herself, saying “The word ‘hurt’ just doesn’t sound right; it’s like I’m talking about animal abuse.” (Think-Aloud, 10/2/2011)

As the above examples illustrate, using synonyms in paraphrasing is not as clear-cut and self-explanatory a strategy as it seems to be. For novice L2 writers who are still developing their English proficiency, the word “synonym” itself needs deconstruction. Questions which the participants raised and need to be addressed in teaching include: what is a synonym, how similar is one word to another (and how can we know), and how to choose a synonym which is appropriate for my context of writing? Without a careful reexamination of these seemingly simple questions, the strategy of using synonyms will remain something of a mystery to many L2 writers. As Helen put it, “To me, whether a synonym works or not depends on luck sometimes.” As more experienced writers, L2 writing instructors may take it for granted that using synonyms is an easy strategy to use

for paraphrasing. This assumption, however, may not hold true for novice L2 writers, who do not have a full command of synonyms to use at hand. In order for this particular strategy to work for L2 writers, writing instructors need to re-examine some of the major assumptions that they hold as insiders of the academic community and try to understand the implementation of the strategy from the learners' perspective.

5.2.2 Strategy two: Changing word forms and sentence structures.

Changing word forms and sentence structures is another important strategy used in paraphrasing and one commonly introduced in academic writing courses. Compared with the use of synonyms, which may result in word-for-word local changes, altering word forms is often accompanied by the change of sentence structures, which thus enable the students to make more substantial changes linguistically in their paraphrases. The participants in the study did attempt to apply this strategy, which most of the time helped them to maintain the meaning of the source text while making substantial linguistic changes.

Jake was one of the students able to use the strategy of changing word forms and sentence structures quite successfully in his paraphrases. According to him, using synonyms is not as effective a strategy as changing word forms and sentence structures. As Jake explained, using synonyms entailed substituting one word with a similar one, which only allowed him to make "awkward small changes that are very possibly not faithful", since "no two words are exactly the same." (Interview, 10/18/2011) Altering word forms, on the other hand, enabled him to stick to the root of the original word used in the source text while only changing the form of it. Such a method, in Jake's opinion,

guaranteed the production of a paraphrase which truly meant the same but looked different. The following example illustrates this point of his.

> **Original**: “One of the **implications** of these findings is that episodes of rejection or relationship dissolution can be just as **damaging** and **debilitating** as episodes of physical pain to the person experiencing them” (Eisenberger, 2011, p. 182).
>
> **Jake’s Paraphrase**: These findings **implicate** that social rejection **damages** and **debilitates** as much as physical pain does.

In this case, Jake changed the noun “implications” and the adjectives “damaging” and “debilitating” into their respective verb forms “implicate,” “damage,” and “debilitate.” As demonstrated by his think-aloud, Jake was consciously looking for the verb form of “implications” to use in his paraphrase, because he believed that it was the only way in which he could restructure the sentence in his paraphrase while maintaining the meaning of the original phrase “one of the implications of these findings.” He did think about using a synonym to replace the word “implication,” but then decided that no other noun seemed to convey exactly the same meaning. As he said after the think-aloud, “I could have changed this part into something like ‘one of the indications of the findings’ or ‘one of the conclusions’, but I don’t think “indication” or ‘conclusion’ carries the same meaning as ‘implication’.” (Think-Aloud, 10/18/2011) As a result, he decided to use a different form of the word “implication” in order to be faithful to the source text. The same consideration also led him to use the two verbs “damage” and “debilitate” instead of finding similar adjectives to replace “damaging” and “debilitating” in his paraphrase.

Chuck also used the strategy of changing word forms and sentence structures in his paraphrases, as he was quite meticulous about not introducing unnecessary changes to his paraphrases. The following is one example of this.

> **Source text**: “Even though we may **treat** physical pain **more seriously** and regard it as the more valid ailment, the pain of social loss can be **equally** as distressing, as demonstrated by the activation of pain-related neural circuitry upon social disconnection” (Eisenberger, 2011, p. 182).
>
> **Chuck’s paraphrase**: Although physical pain **is treated in a more serious way**, regarding it as a real damage to physical health, neural studies have illustrated that social pain should receive **equal treatment** (p. 182).

As shown in the paraphrase, instead of using the verb “treat” in its active form, Chuck employed the passive voice in his sentence and also used the noun form “treatment” in the later part of the paraphrase. He also changed the adverb “seriously” and used the adjective form. As Chuck pointed out in the think-aloud, changing word forms “naturally made [him] change the sentence structures”, which helped him to produce paraphrases that did not look like the original text. (Think-Aloud, 11/10/2011)

In general, the participants who used the strategy of changing word forms and sentence structures were quite successful. As some explained, changing word forms was one of the safe strategies that they felt comfortable using, because they believed that it was *the* strategy that truly allowed them to make linguistic changes without having to risk twisting the meaning of source texts. In addition, as they used a different form of a word, these L2 students, who were often only willing to make word-level changes in their paraphrases, were almost forced to restructure linguistically in order to make sure that their paraphrases were grammatically appropriate. The relative success in this particular strategy may also have to do with these Chinese students’ previous knowledge of English grammar. Having received focused instruction on English grammar in China, these novice L2 writers seemed fairly comfortable manipulating grammatical structures to achieve desired linguistic changes in their paraphrases. L2 writing instructors, therefore,

can take advantage of this literacy background of Chinese students and encourage them to fully utilize the word and structure rearrangement strategy to compensate for their insufficient command of synonyms to help improve the quality of their paraphrases.

5.2.3 Strategy three: Keeping words from source texts.

The concept of patchwriting proposed by Howard (1992), which refers to "copying from a source text and then deleting some words, altering grammatical structures, or plugging in one-for-one synonym substitutes" (p. 233), helps to distinguish between intentional cheating through copying and unintended, inappropriate use of certain wording of source texts in one's writing. As Howard (1992) points out, it is understandable for ESL writers, whose English proficiency is still developing, to rely on the wording of source texts when expected to restate the ideas and to use patchwriting as both a coping and learning strategy. This is another dimension of their developmental trajectory in which they use the strategies that seem best at the time relative to what they have learned at that point. Indeed, patchwriting is one of the most notable developmentally-oriented perspectives on L2 writing to emerge over the past few decades of L2 writing research. The data of my research confirms L2 writers' use of patchwriting as a strategy in even short paraphrasing exercises, showing that such a practice, although inappropriate in the larger context of academic writing, is in fact a result of students' judicious decision making in the attempt to produce what they believe to be the best paraphrases.

Drawing from Howard's (1992) concept of patchwriting, I further examined the words and phrases that the participants of the study decided to keep in their paraphrases.

Based on the think-aloud data, I seek to reveal how the students made decisions regarding what words to keep in their paraphrases, hoping to provide an emic perspective about L2 writers' experiences with paraphrasing and patchwriting. In this section, I will present three major categories of words and phrases that the participants of this study frequently kept in their paraphrases.

5.2.3.1 Category one: Key words containing central topics of source texts.

One major category of words that the students chose to keep verbatim in their paraphrases contained key words presenting the central topics of the source texts. As the learners had already read and discussed the assigned reading material before completing the paraphrasing tasks, they were aware of the general topics and therefore able to identify words and phrases that pointed out the focuses of the texts. For instance, the word "shame" clearly presents the focus of source text one, the central idea of which is about the functions and limited efficiency of shame as a type of regulating force; the phrase "the pain of social loss" captures the topic of source text two, which discusses the potential overlap between social rejection and physical pain; and "neuroscience" and "decision making" include the two most important topics of source text three about research decision making from a neuroscientific perspective.

> **Source text one**: "if humans are to succeed as a species, our collective **shame** over destroying other life-forms should grow in proportion to our understanding of their various ecological roles. Maybe the same attention to one another that promoted our own evolutionary success will keep us from failing the other species in life's fabric and, in the end, ourselves" (Jacquet, 2011, p. 140).
>
> **Source text two**: "One of the implications of these findings is that episodes of rejection or relationship dissolution can be just as damaging and debilitating as episodes of physical pain to the person experiencing them. Even though we may treat physical pain more seriously and regard it as the more valid ailment, **the**

> **pain of social loss** can be equally as distressing, as demonstrated by the activation of pain-related neural circuitry upon social disconnection" (Eisenberger, 2011, p. 182).

> **Source text three**: "Perhaps more important, the incorporation of **neuroscience** into the study of **decision making** may change how we define patterns of behavior. Rather than being labeled 'timid' or 'cautious', a person may be described as having elevated amygdala sensitivity, which implies greater risk aversion in some circumstances and greater loss aversion in others and so forth" (McClure, 2011, p. 124).

When paraphrasing source text one, eight out of the nine participants chose to keep the word "shame" in their paraphrases, and none of these eight students attempted to use a synonym to replace "shame" or use other forms of the word (e.g. shameful feelings, etc.). Most of them included this key term in the beginning of their paraphrases, clearly pointing out the focus of the source text. Here are some examples.

Lucia's paraphrase: Human's common **shame** on hurting other forms of life should…

> **Wendy's paraphrase**: Human being should have a feel of **shame** when destroying other species…

> **Roger's paraphrase**: As a successful species, human should have the **shame**…

By choosing to keep the key word in their paraphrases, the students demonstrated familiarity with the source texts as well as the knowledge of the importance of including such words in their paraphrases in order to make the focuses clear to readers who may not have access to the source texts.

Of all the participants, Coco was the only one who did not use the word "shame" in her paraphrase; in fact, she did not use any form of the word "shame," and her

paraphrase did not contain words or expressions that pointed readers to this particular topic.

> **Coco's paraphrase**: Human should notice that it is a blunder to destroy other life-forms in order to make their evolutionary success. This notice can also save human and ecological world from getting fabric.

In her paraphrase, Coco decided to use the structure "it is a blunder" to express the meaning of "shame." According to her, she was trying her best to make changes in her paraphrase, and she thought that the word "shame" was not a particularly difficult one to replace. What did not occur to her was that the word "shame" actually functioned as the anchor of the source text; her paraphrase, which did not include the word in any of its forms, would probably make readers feel confused about the central topic of the source text. In fact, substantial changes in this aspect are not desired, as they are likely to result in vague focuses and compromise the clarity of the paraphrase. Therefore, the ability to identify and sometimes patchwrite words and phrases that capture the key topics or central focuses of source texts is needed for these L2 writers to produce successful paraphrases.

5.2.3.2 Category two: Disciplinary terminology.

A second major type of words that the participants of the study chose to keep in their paraphrases contained disciplinary terminologies. For example, in source text two, the author, a social psychologist, explains in detail the overlap between social rejection and physical pain and uses the phrase "pain-related neural circuitry" in the sentence; in source text three, the author contrasts the adjectives commonly used in everyday language ("timid" or "cautious") with the terminology used in neuroscience research

("elevated amygdala sensitivity"). As shown in the following texts, by utilizing field-specific terminology in their explanations, the authors of the two source texts demonstrate their knowledge of the field as well as their legitimate status as an expert academic writer who shares the discourse of their respective disciplinary communities.

> **Source text two**: "…Even though we may treat physical pain more seriously and regard it as the more valid ailment, the pain of social loss can be equally as distressing, as demonstrated by the activation of **pain-related neural circuitry** upon social disconnection" (Eisenberger, 2011, p. 182).
>
> **Source text three**: "…Rather than being labeled 'timid' or 'cautious', a person may be described as having **elevated amygdala sensitivity**, which implies greater **risk aversion** in some circumstances and greater **loss aversion** in others and so forth" (McClure, 2011, p. 124).

When paraphrasing source text two, five out of nine participants kept the exact words of "neural circuitry," while who two chose to keep the longer phrase "pain-related neural circuitry" and one included the even longer chunk of "the activation of pain-related neural circuitry." When asked whether they understood the technical terms used in the source texts, most students offered a positive answer. As Jake pointed out, "the term is not a problem, because I read the whole chapter and I know what the author refers to and I can explain if I absolutely have to." (Interview, 10/18/2011) It seems that the reason why the students chose to keep disciplinary terminology in their paraphrases is not that they failed to understand the terms; instead, other concerns were present as the L2 writers made decisions in the process of paraphrasing. Lucia, for instance, explained her rationale for keeping the phrase "neural circuitry": "I probably could replace it with my own explanations, but then the paraphrase would be too wordy and not concise enough." (Think-Aloud, 10/25/2011) Sharing Lucia's concern about the brevity of the paraphrase,

Wendy also believed that phrases such as “pain-related neural circuitry,” which “sound professional and academic,” were exactly what characterized academic writing style: “If I explain myself, it would be in really simple terms.” (Interview, 10/19/2011) As the data shows, participants’ decision to retain disciplinary terminology in their paraphrases is in fact a result of their attempts to achieve conciseness and maintain an academic style in their writing.

5.2.3.3 Category three: “Unparaphrasable” expressions.

A third category, which is also the major category of words that students took from the source texts and included in their paraphrases, was the group of what they called “simply unparaphrasable” words, From the perspective of expert academic writers, this group of words and phrases may not seem unique at all and can be easily replaced; yet, from the lens of the novice academic writers, these expressions were what distinguished their writing from ‘good’ academic writing. As a result, they chose to keep these words in their paraphrases, in that they believed that there were no alternative ways to explain the same meaning in an academically appropriate manner. For example, in the participants’ paraphrases of source text one, the most frequently kept words that belonged to this category were “destroy” (5 “destroying” and 1 “destroy”), “understanding” (5), “evolutionary success” (5), and “life-forms” (4).

> **Source text one**: “if humans are to succeed as a species, our collective shame over **destroy**ing other **life-forms** should grow in proportion to our **understanding** of their various ecological roles. Maybe the same attention to one another that promoted our own **evolutionary success** will keep us from failing the other species in life’s fabric and, in the end, ourselves” (Jacquet, 2011, p. 140).

It is worth noting that the seemingly common word “destroy” posed considerable difficulties for the participants during paraphrasing. All six participants who eventually chose to keep “destroy” in their paraphrases struggled to identify another academically appropriate way to express the same meaning, as the think-aloud data clearly shows. Jack, for instance, after brainstorming for a while, finally gave up and said: “there is just no other way to say it.” (Think-Aloud, 10/23/2011) In fact, the three students who avoided using “destroy” in their paraphrases all expressed their frustration with having to find an effective alternative for the word as well as their dissatisfaction with what they came up with (“kill,” “hurt,” and “eradicate”).

As for the word “understanding,” most participants also experienced difficulty identifying an appropriate alternative to use in their paraphrases. Consequently, five students decided to keep it, as is shown in the following examples.

> **Jake’s paraphrase**: If humans are successful species, the more **understanding** they have in other life-forms, the more shame should feel when destroying life-forms those play a variety of roles in the ecological environment…
>
> **Helen’s paraphrase:** If human want to be success in being a kind of specy, the shame on destroying other creatures’ life should become an **understanding** of their different life-styles…

Among the three students who attempted to change “understanding” in their paraphrases, Jack was one of the relatively successful ones.

> **Jack’s paraphrase**: Human being should double their shame while destroying other creatures along with improved knowledge in the necessity of their crucial ecological elements.

In his paraphrase , he used “knowledge” to replace “understanding” (although the complete paraphrase still sounds a little ambiguous because of the use of long sentence

structures: see previous discussion in 4.2.1). Compared with Jack, Lucia was less successful in explaining the meaning of "understanding" in her paraphrase. Although her attempt to use a verb instead of a noun to explain "understanding" was admirable, the verbal phrase that she chose for her paraphrase "think of" seems rather different from "understanding" and thus inaccurate in maintaining the meaning of the source text.

> **Lucia's paraphrase**: Human's common shame on hurting other forms of life should grow **to think of** their different roles in ecosystems, if human succeed as a species.

The other two students, Coco and Wendy, who did not include "understanding" in their paraphrases simply neglected the part about human beings' developing knowledge about the roles of other species in the ecological system and its relationship with an increasing sense of shame. Here are the two paraphrases.

> **Coco's paraphrase**: Human should notice that it is a blunder to destroy other life-forms in order to make their evolutionary success. This notice can also save human and ecological world from getting fabric.

> **Wendy's paraphrase**: Human being should have a feel of shame when destroying other species if we want to survive as a species and play a good ecological role, and pay the same attention to protect other species as our humans to avoid being destroyed by ourselves

It is interesting to note here that although many participants chose to keep the word "life-forms" in their paraphrases and considered it "unparaphrasable," the article from which the text was selected for the paraphrasing exercise actually offers three different ways that could be used to replace "(other) life-forms", including "nonhuman life", "living things" and "nonhumans". Here is the part of the article preceding the text used for the paraphrasing exercise:

> “Finally, consider who belongs to the group. Today we are faced with the additional challenge of balancing human interests and the interests of **nonhuman life**. How can we encourage cooperation among all **living things** when the **nonhumans** have no voice?...” (Jacquet, 2011, p. 140)

Interestingly, none of the participants checked the book right next to them for the context from which the source text was taken during their paraphrasing.

As the participants believed that certain words in the original texts were unparaphrasable, they tended to keep these words in their paraphrases. What complicates the matter is that as they decided to include the expressions. These novice L2 writers were sometimes and perhaps inevitably limited by the sentence structures used in the source texts, since it is quite challenging to find a different sentence structure where all the words that students chose to keep would still fit.

5.3 Summary

As is shown in the data analysis, the novice L2 writers in the study actively negotiated the assigned paraphrasing tasks within the linguistic dimension. New to the concept of paraphrasing and source-based writing in general, the participants attempted to utilize their existing language repertoire to produce paraphrases that would satisfy the general expectations in the academic context. As they tried to make sense of what paraphrasing is and what good paraphrasing is, they experimented with the different strategies introduced in class, with some being more successful than others. Compared with the wording of the source texts, the students’ paraphrases demonstrated features that clearly mark their status as novice academic writers. Their paraphrases were sometimes characterized by a downgraded linguistic complexity and lack of specificity; yet at other times, they were written in excessively long sentence structures with unnecessary details.

These seemingly contrasting features were what captured the learning and negotiating experiences of the participants, who were charting a new territory with limited resources. As the above analysis has revealed, although the final paraphrasing products may be unsatisfactory, the decisions that the participants made were conscious ones based on their tentative understanding of paraphrasing as well as self-assessment of their own linguistic proficiency. From a developmental perspective, they used the resources at their disposal at that point in their evolution as academic writers in English. The results at the linguistic level suggest that, to truly help these ESL students improve their paraphrasing skill, it is essential for writing instructors to go beyond the products of paraphrasing, dig into the processes through which the paraphrases are produced, and see paraphrasing through the eyes of a novice academic writer, that is, within a developmental lens. By re-examining major assumptions about paraphrasing often taken for granted by experienced writers, L2 writing instructors will develop a better idea of what needs to be explained and discussed in class in relation to paraphrasing.

Chapter 6: Charting the New Territory of Writing Research Papers: Novice L2 Writers' Engagement with Paraphrasing Within the Rhetorical Dimension

In this chapter, I will describe the ESL participants' negotiation with paraphrasing within the rhetorical dimension, that is, the rhetorical functions related to paraphrasing and how the students used paraphrasing in research paper writing. Paraphrasing is not simply a matter of replacing and rearranging words at the linguistic level; what is changed must also work well with the content surrounding it. It has a partnership with the sentences that precede and follow it. In short, a sentence being paraphrased operates within a larger rhetorical context, and so its paraphrased version must achieve the same goals. As this chapter shows, this is an aspect of paraphrasing that was difficult for the participants to understand, especially in light of the heavily linguistic orientation toward paraphrasing they had adopted, where their emphasis was on generating linguistically correct recasts of the original sentences. The chapter focuses primarily on their experiences with research paper writing, as this was where their paraphrasing had to be contextualized (in contrast to the decontextualized exercises they completed earlier in the course).

Towards the middle of the term, students started working on a 2-3 page short research paper in which they were expected to select outside sources in response to their

research question, either suggested by the instructor or generated by the students themselves. This short research paper assignment was designed to provide students with an opportunity to practice working with sources, thus preparing them for the final long research paper where they would work with at least four source texts and complete a seven-page paper by integrating source text material and constructing their own arguments. As they engaged with both the short and long research paper writing tasks, students utilized paraphrasing as a tool to incorporate source information into their writing. Although they had frequently practiced paraphrasing in short exercises before they started the short and long research paper assignment, the students still encountered major challenges as they tried to apply these skills to actual writing tasks. In this section, I will present major rhetorical features of these novice L2 writers' paraphrases in their research papers and the decisions that they made in relation to paraphrasing, seeking to shed light on how ESL students new to the concept of paraphrasing attempt to utilize it to facilitate their own writing with a rhetorical context.

6.1 Rhetorical Features of Learners' Paraphrases in Research Papers

When the students were practicing paraphrasing through short exercises, they concentrated on linguistic manipulation, substituting words and phrases and changing sentence structures. Given that the source texts they were assigned to paraphrase often consisted of only one or two sentences, it is natural that these L2 writers would direct attention to the linguistic aspect of paraphrasing, with the attempt to produce paraphrases that looked completely different. When working on the research papers, however, the students encountered major challenges as they interacted with longer and more

challenging source texts. Instead of focusing on the linguistic domain only, as they did for the short paraphrasing exercises, the L2 writers now had to make more complicated decisions about paraphrasing, which they were not used to. For example, they needed to decide which source texts were the most relevant to their papers, which parts of the source texts they would paraphrase, where to put the paraphrased information in their papers, etc. As they tried to make sense of paraphrasing in a more demanding writing context, these novice L2 writers produced paraphrases which were not the most effective rhetorically speaking. In this section, I will discuss two important rhetorical features that characterized the participants' practices of paraphrasing for research paper writing, hoping to unveil the major struggles that these learners experienced when attempting to apply the skills that they had just learned at the beginning of the term to authentic writing tasks.

6.1.1 Feature one: Lack of contextual information.

One important rhetorical feature of the participants' paraphrases is the lack of contextual information which introduces the paraphrased text. When including specific scientific information taken from academic source texts, these ESL writers often provided little or no introduction to the source texts to help contextualize the paraphrased information. The inevitable consequence is that readers are likely to feel confused, as they may not necessarily have access to the larger source texts. As is revealed through the text-based interviews, none of the participants seemed aware of the necessity of introducing the context from which the paraphrased information was taken.

For example, when working on her short research paper about the relationship between physical and social pain, Helen used one of the chapters in the required textbook to explain how providing emotional support may help to decrease physical pain that people experience. The following short paragraph is what Helen produced, with the paraphrased information underlined.

> **Helen's short research paper**: …But is it just the stress and social pain that being released? The psychology expert Eisenberger does not seem to agree with this. In the article *Why Rejection Hurt* she described one of her experiments, which female participants were asked to rate the painful stimuli while some of them holding their companion's hand and the others holding stranger's hand or a ball. From the result of the experiment, the author was easy to conclude that "Apparently even reminders of one's social support figure may reduce physical pain as well as social pain." (Eisenberger, 2011, p180)

As is shown in the short paragraph, Helen started describing the specific procedures of the experiment without providing any information about the general design of the study in relation to its purposes. This was a rhetorically decontextualized paraphrase. After introducing the source text ("In the article *Why Rejection Hurt*") and pointing out the nature of the study ("one of her experiments"), Helen immediately began talking about what the participants were asked to do in the experiment ("female participants were asked to rate the painful stimuli while some of them holding their companion's hand and the others holding stranger's hand or a ball"). Although the paraphrase itself was quite faithful to the original text in terms of explaining the specifics of the experiment, it may cause readers to wonder why the participants "were asked to rate the painful stimuli" and why some of them were "holding their companion's hand and the others holding stranger's hand or a ball." Without any information about the context and the purpose of the experiment, Helen's paraphrase was not as successful rhetorically as it could be.

It is worth noting, however, that Helen did attempt to offer some introductory information about the experiment at the beginning of the paragraph before presenting her paraphrase. In the first sentence of the short paragraph, she briefly indicated that the general topic of this paragraph would be "stress and social pain"; yet, this information seems too vague to actually help readers understand how the specific design of the experiment is connected to "stress and social pain." In fact, the researcher who conducted the experiment presented all the relevant information in her original source text, as demonstrated in the following paragraph:

> **Source text**: "A second consequence of a physical-social pain overlap is that factors that increase or decrease one kind of pain should affect the other kind of pain in a similar manner. Thus, factors typically thought to reduce social pain (such as feeling socially supported) should also reduce physical pain, and factors typically thought to reduce physical pain (such as pain medication) should also reduce social pain. Indeed, we have found evidence for both of these possibilities. <u>To explore whether social support reduces physical pain, we asked female participants to rate the unpleasantness of a series of painful heat stimuli delivered to their forearm as they performed a number of different tasks. In one of these tasks, participants received social support (e.g. they held their romantic relationship partner's hand), and in others they did not (e.g. they held a stranger's hand or a squeeze ball).</u>" (Eisenberger, 2011, p. 179)

The underlined section was what Helen used to produce her paraphrase in the short paragraph just analyzed. As can been seen here, the source text author, Eisenberger, explicitly stated the purpose of the experiment, which is "[t]o explore whether social support reduces physical pain." By introducing the key concepts examined through the experiment ("social support," "physical pain"), Eisenberger provided a roadmap that guides readers to make sense of the specific experimental procedures that follow. As she continued to describe the experiment, Eisenberger utilized parentheses (e.g., "they held their romantic relationship partner's hand" and "they held a stranger's hand or a squeeze

ball") to explain that the specific action of holding the hand of one's significant other was considered as one form of social support, whereas holding a stranger's hand or a ball equaled lack of social support. This information not only clarifies why she asked the participants to perform those specific actions, but also helps to connect the particular design of the study with its overall purpose stated earlier. What is also worth noting here is how the author of the source text rhetorically framed the experiment in the sentences preceding the underlined section about the experiment. As is shown in the above paragraph, Eisenberger introduced the larger focus of her research in the first sentence, which is "physical-social pain overlap" and then explained the specific factors that she intended to examine in her experiment in connection with this focus: "feeling socially supported" and "pain medication." In this way, Eisenberger provided sufficient and effective background information that facilitates readers' understanding of the experiment introduced later. The overall structure of Eisenberger's rhetorical move from general to specific can be summarized in the following figure.

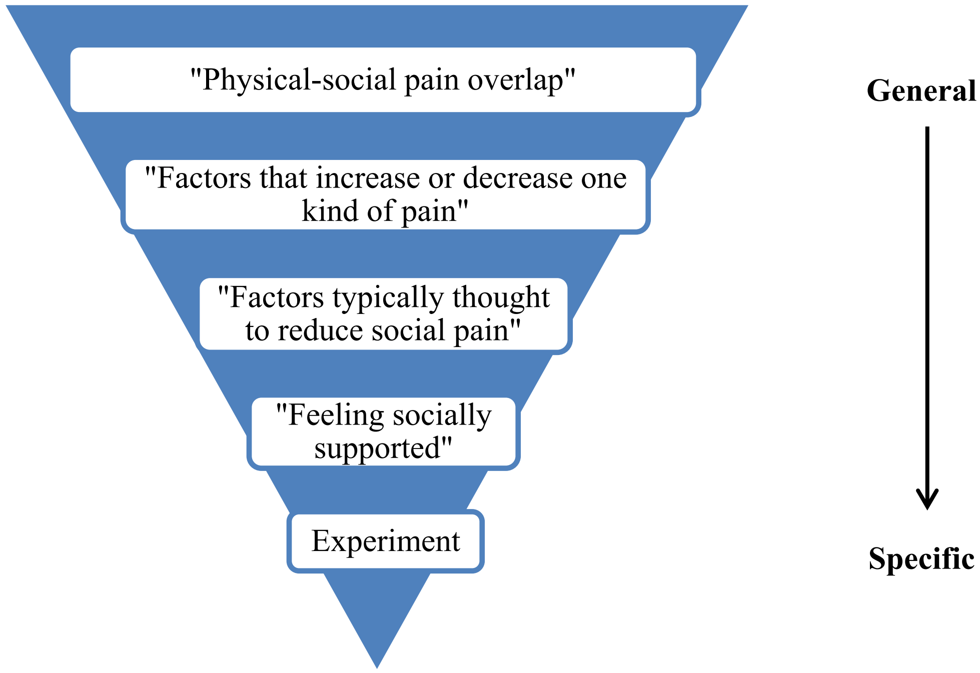

Figure 1 The Rhetorical Structure of the Source Text

Through the comparison of Helen's paraphrase and Eisenberger's original text, it is apparent that Helen's paraphrase was not as successful as it could be rhetorically. Helen jumped into the specifics of the experiment without providing information needed to contextualize the experiment. In other words, the top four layers of information present in Figure 1 were missing in Helen's paraphrase. It is possible that Helen understood paraphrasing as focusing on short chunks of texts only, especially after completing the paraphrasing exercises earlier in the course, thus ignoring the beginning part of the original paragraph entirely. It could also be that those linguistically-driven exercises had framed (for her and other students) paraphrasing as a fundamentally linguistic act, thus making it difficult to conceptualize it as a rhetorically-oriented act as well. The above

analysis clearly shows that Helen lacks a general sense of the rhetorical functions that can and should be achieved through paraphrasing, perhaps because of how paraphrasing had been introduced and practiced in the course up to that point. Because of this, although she was able to produce a linguistically successful paraphrase, Helen was experiencing major challenges utilizing paraphrasing to achieve rhetorical effectiveness for her paper.

Another situation where students' paraphrases lack contextual information has to do with the explanations of specific concepts and terminology. In her long research paper, for example, Lucia produced the following text in which she talked about how stress may negatively influence one's physical health. The underlined sentence is the paraphrase under discussion here.

> **Lucia's long research paper**: Firstly, stress has negative physical effects on human beings. Daniela Kaufer and Darlene Francis (2011) announce that Hans Selye initially put forward the idea that though stress is often considered as a mental condition, it also influences the physical health of human bodies (P.58).

Lucia directly pointed out in the first sentence that the focus of the paragraph would be on the negative effects that stress can cause. It is also clear that her intention of using the source text of Kaufer and Francis (2011) was to support the topic sentence. During the text-based interview, Lucia explained that she incorporated the source here right after the topic sentence because she believed that information from the two experts would add credibility to her own claim. (Interview, 12/3/2011) Lucia's paraphrase was quite faithful in terms of content, and the paraphrased information, which was closely related to the topic sentence, did provide support for her claim.

What is interesting to analyze in this case is the name "Hans Selye" in the middle of the paraphrase. Lucia mentioned the name without offering any background

information about who this person was and why his idea was so important. Although it is not difficult for readers to tell that Lucia was using Kaufer and Francis (2011) as a secondary source and that Hans Selye was the actual author who proposed the idea about the interplay between stress and one's physical health, the name Hans Selye itself is likely to cause confusion for readers, who are not provided with the background knowledge needed to process the new information.

The authors of the source texts, in comparison, clearly introduced Hans Selye and explained why he is an important figure to mention in the current writing context. As is shown in the following text (the underlined sentence is what Lucia's paraphrase was based on), the authors Kaufer and Francis pointed out that Hans Selye was an endocrinologist in the 1950s who first proposed the idea of stress affecting people' health. In the next sentence, Kaufer and Francis also explained the importance of Hans Selye's work and his concepts: "Selye's work has become so well known…". All this information about Hans Selye not only helps readers to understand who Hans Selye is and why it is necessary to mention him in this particular context of writing.

> **Source text**: "The idea that stress---commonly regarded as an abstract, psychological state---also affects our physical health was first proposed by the endocrinologist Hans Selye in the 1950s. Selye's work has become so well known that his concepts of "eustress" and "distress" are taught in high school and college classrooms. Subsequent advances in molecular biology and genetics have further eroded the divide between the "psychology" and the "biology" of stress." (Kaufer & Francis, 2011, p. 58).

Clearly, Lucia's paraphrase is not as rhetorically effective as the original source text, although the content of her paraphrase was quite faithful and the linguistic representation of the source text was generally accurate. Figure 2 summarizes the

differences between how the authors of the source text handled the information about Hans Selye and what Lucia did in her paraphrase. Compared with the source text, which provided sufficient background information about Hans Selye to help with readers' understanding, Lucia's paraphrase is likely to leave readers with questions about who he is and why he is mentioned. Lucia's lack of rhetorical concerns in her paraphrase inevitably undermines the effectiveness of paraphrasing as a tool used to achieve coherence of one's writing. Here, again, a question that arises is whether this was due to the way in which paraphrasing was introduced earlier in the course, where a rhetorical purpose for it was not emphasized. For this or perhaps other reasons, Lucia appeared unprepared to make the transition to rhetorically-oriented paraphrasing.

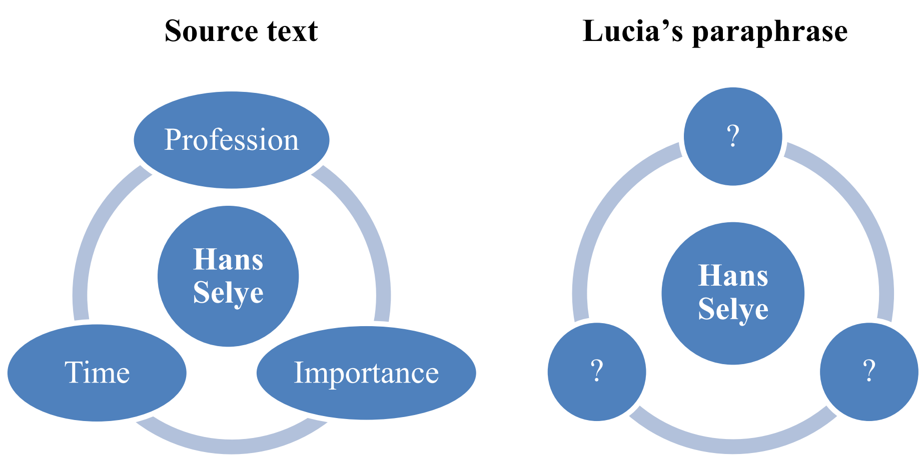

Figure 2 Comparison of the Source Text and Lucia's Paraphrase

The above two examples, which were selected from a pool of similar examples,

were chosen to demonstrate an important feature of ESL students' paraphrasing practices in research paper writing: lack of contextual information. Both Helen and Lucia were able to select relevant information from source texts to include in their own writing and express the meaning quite accurately in their paraphrases; what they struggled with was how to achieve desirable rhetorical functions through paraphrasing. On the one hand, this suggests that the participants were unaware of the concept of audience as it relates to paraphrasing and their uncertainty about the amount of information needed in order for a general audience to follow their explanations of source texts. On the other hand, it displays their general lack of understanding of the rhetorical functions that can be achieved through paraphrasing. During the text-based interviews, all of the participants revealed their unawareness of and unfamiliarity with the rhetorical dimension of paraphrasing and defined paraphrasing purely from the linguistic perspective. This insufficient understanding inevitably limited how the students were able to utilize paraphrasing as a writing tool to achieve certain rhetorical purposes in their writing. It is worth noting here that the instruction that the students received in the writing class about paraphrasing focused more on the linguistic procedures than the rhetorical functions. Although the instructor of the course expected the students to use paraphrasing as a rhetorical tool in their writing, she did not provide much instruction about how this should be achieved. The gap between the cultural assumptions held by the teacher and what the students actually knew is at play here, and the lack of emphasis on demystifying the purposes of paraphrasing from a rhetorical perspective in the course is one important reason for the participants' general unawareness of the functions of paraphrasing in

source-based writing.

6.1.2 Feature two: Disconnection between paraphrased information and one's own points.

Another rhetorical characteristic of the ESL writers' paraphrases is the lack of explanations which connect the paraphrased information with their own claims. An analysis of their paraphrases in both short and long research papers clearly demonstrates that the participants were generally unaware of the necessity of explicitly explaining how certain information taken from source texts was use to construct their own points. As a result, their paraphrases only restated the source information without achieving any of the writers' purposes. In this sense, paraphrasing was utilized in a rather limited way from the rhetorical perspective.

As an illustration, when working on her long research paper about the positive and negative influence of stress on human bodies, Lucia produced the following paragraph that focused on the negative effects stress causes to people's heath (the paraphrased information is underlined).

> **Lucia's long research paper**: Generally speaking, stress has negative effects on human bodies. <u>Daniela Kaufer and Darlene Francis (2011) state that the methods human's brain conducted to react to the stress can have temporary and persistent effects on human bodies (p.58). Daniela Kaufer and Darlene Francis (2011) announce that human's brain can release stress hormones after experiencing a stressful experience. These hormones play important roles like structured message carrier, which can spread around the body and affect all the tissues and a great deal of cells to respond to the stress. This is the process of how our brains react to stress.</u>

The paragraph starts with a clear topic sentence pointing out the focus of the discussion: how stress in general causes negative effects on one's physical health. From this

sentence, it is natural for readers to expect that Lucia would talk about how or why stress has such negative effects and what these negative effects are. The underlined paraphrase, which follows the topic sentence, however, did not include such information. Instead, the paraphrase focused on describing how human brains react to stress by releasing stress hormones and how these hormones impact body functions. During the text-based interview, Lucia clarified her purpose of using the source information here. According to her, the reason why she decided to introduce how the brain responds to stress was that she wanted to show readers how the body reaction triggered by stress affects the condition of the whole body system and makes it vulnerable to certain diseases. (Interview, 12/3/2011) Lucia's oral explanations established a clear connection between the topic of negative effects caused by stress and how human bodies react to stress, making the choice of using the particular source a reasonable one. However, since she did not include any of these explanations in her actual writing, the paraphrase only served to introduce what the source text authors Kaufer and Francis said in their article, without achieving its desired rhetorical purpose of informing readers of why this particular source was chosen in this context and how it was related to Lucia's own claim. Without effective explanations, the paraphrased information is disconnected with the topic sentence.

A similar example appeared in Jake's long research paper, in which he focused on the discussion about long-term and short-term negative effects caused by stress. In one of his paragraphs, Jake explained in detail how stress hormones work (the underlined part is the paraphrase):

> **Jake's long research paper**: CRH is the kind of hormone released when the brain perceives stress, or it can be directly called "stress hormone" and it

> functions to help the human body to deal with stress. Kaufer and Francis (2011) said that not all the CRH shared a totally same feature in different human body. Usually their difference are due to slight mutation, and the differences in CRH may contribute to the variety of levels of vulnerabilities to the stress in different human bodies.

In the first sentence, Jake introduced CRH as one of the stress hormones, pointing out in the latter part of the sentence that the focus of the following discussion would be on how "it functions to help the human body to deal with stress." However, what follows this sentence is paraphrased information talking about the differences of how the same hormone functions in different bodies. In other words, the emphasis of the discussion was shifted from how the hormone functions in general to help people tackle stress to how the hormone functions differently in different people. Because of this shift of focus, the paraphrased information is not actually supporting Jake's claim and sounds disconnected from the first sentence.

Both examples analyzed above demonstrate how the novice L2 writers' paraphrases were disconnected from the claims that they intended to make. In fact, this is a very common feature of the paraphrases that the students produced in their research paper writing. In these cases, paraphrasing did not achieve its rhetorical function of supporting the writers' arguments, as a rhetorical "black box" (Figure 3) exists between these L2 writers' claims and their paraphrases.

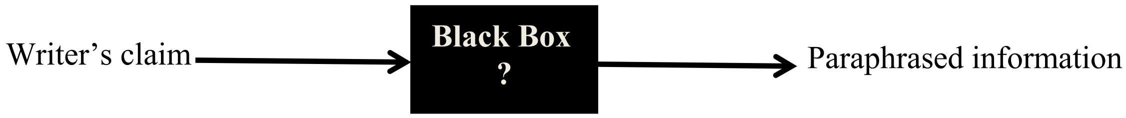

Figure 3 "Black Box" in Participants' Paraphrases

As the above analysis shows, the participants in this study often do not provide sufficient explanations about how their paraphrased information is connected to their claims, thus leaving the reader in confusion about the reasons why certain source information was included in the first place. The "black box" here, therefore, points out the participants' lack of understanding of how to effectively use paraphrasing as a writing strategy. To them, the function of paraphrasing was only to present information that they saw as relevant to their general topics. What is missing, however, was the explanation about why they considered certain information to be relevant. The existence of the "black box", in a sense, undermines the rhetorical effectiveness of paraphrasing for these novice L2 writers.

6.2 Decision Making: Quoting or Paraphrasing?

Apart from the two rhetorical features of paraphrasing discussed in the above section, another important observation based on the analysis of students' source integration practices in research paper writing is in fact the infrequent use of paraphrasing itself. Although the participants referred to sources quite often in both their short and long research papers, they demonstrated a clear preference for the use of direct quoting over paraphrasing in such situations. From a rhetorical perspective, this had important implications for their writing. This section, therefore, examines participants' decision

making processes in relation to their choice between quoting and paraphrasing, seeking to reveal how these novice academic writers conceptualized and understood paraphrasing in the context of paper writing.

Based on the two rounds of text-based interviews, it is apparent that all the participants had reasons for their strong preference for direct quoting when they felt the need to incorporate source information in their papers. Although these reasons may not sound valid from an expert academic writer's point of view, they revealed how the students attempted to make sense of paraphrasing and direct quoting. Such an emic perspective is essential in problematizing the taken-for-granted assumptions that writing teachers may hold as experienced academic writers. In this section, I will present the reasons that the participants reported in text-based interviews for the use of direct quoting and paraphrasing, hoping to contribute an emic perspective which adds to the current understanding of novice ESL writers' paraphrasing practices, particularly within the rhetorical dimension.

When asked to explain their reasons for choosing either quoting or paraphrasing to use for their research paper writing, the students all provided very specific situations where they believed one of the two strategies would work better, instead of generating broad criteria. For example, when asked how he decided to use quoting or paraphrasing, Jack provided the following answer: "I would paraphrase if the source is a newspaper, a magazine, or a website, but I would quote if the source is an academic journal article, a dictionary entry, or a government document." (Interview, 11/29/2011) In a similar vein, Coco explained: "I would choose quoting if the source was a story, and paraphrasing if

the source was an experiment." (Interview, 12/3/2011) It is important for L2 writing instructors to understand how the participants choose between direct quoting and paraphrasing in order to better help these novice L2 writers to truly master the skills of textual borrowing in academic writing.

6.2.1 Participants' reasons for using direct quoting.

In general, the participants came up with the following reasons for direct quoting:

1. The original text is eloquently/poetically/smartly written.
2. The original text is a proverb or written by famous people.
3. The original text is introducing the writer's arguments/claims/points/stances.
4. The original text is an academic article.
5. The original text has a lot of statistics.
6. The original text is a description of scenery.
7. The original text is a story.
8. The original text is incomprehensible.
9. The original text is too difficult/ long to paraphrase.

Of these nine situations, the first two are consistent with the general criteria introduced in earlier class discussions about when to use direct quotes. Although all of the participants expressed their understanding of the necessity of keeping the exact wording when the source text is written in a unique style, their interpretations of the word "unique" varied from person to person. Different students used different adjectives to describe what they believed "unique" meant (e. g., Helen chose "eloquently," Jake selected "poetically," and Chuck used "smartly"). In fact, when asked to elaborate on the

adjectives that they chose, the participants themselves expressed their confusion and uncertainty about their own definition of "unique." As Jake put it, "Honestly speaking, I think my ability to evaluate the style of the source text is really limited. I actually can't tell if a sentence is poetic or not. What I am pretty sure is that my style is definitely not poetic, and I guess the style that is opposite to mine is poetic." (Interview, 10/18/2011) Chuck, who was one of the best writers in the class, expressed a similar concern: "I often use direct quotes because they are smartly written. But sometimes I feel that all the sentences from source texts are written in this smart way, and I don't think I can distinguish between those that are truly worth quoting and those that are not." (Interview, 12/7/2011) As is shown in these quotes, the novice L2 writers encountered major challenges when grasping the abstract concept of "a unique writing style," a common guideline offered in writing textbooks to explain one of the situations where direct quoting is preferred.

Interestingly, as the novice L2 writers made attempts to decode the abstract guidelines introduced in class about when to use direct quotes, they came up with a set of specific rules that they believed to have more practical relevance to completing different writing assignments. In essence, they converted these guidelines into terms and ideas that worked better for them. As Vera explained, "I usually try to generate rules that I can use in my own writing regarding when and how to quote." (Interview, 11/30/2011) This common practice among the participants explains the very specific situations envisioned in the above list (No. 3-9). These situations may sound "silly" to expert writers; yet, all of them are indeed more specific, thus more helpful, to these novice writers who were

looking for practical guidelines which they could easily follow when writing their papers. Chuck, for example, believed that he should use direct quoting when the source information was introducing the source text author's stances towards a certain topic. (Interview, 12/7/2011) When working on his long research paper where he was discussing the relationship between correlation and causation, Chuck used the following direct quote: "But the answer to the strict question remains 'no' (Stigler, 2005, p. 1)" to help support his own opinion that causation cannot be deduced from correlation. When asked in the interview why he decided to quote instead of paraphrasing this seemingly simple sentence, Chuck explained that he believed that this particular line accurately conveyed the firm negative tone of the source text author Stigler, and this authoritative tone would be lost if he had chosen to paraphrase the sentence. Rhetorically, then, this choice enabled him to better achieve his goals. According to him, "If this is something just from me, people will not believe it." (Interview, 12/7/2011) For some unexplained reason, Chuck perceived paraphrasing as inferior to direct quoting when it comes to representing the stances and points of source text authors, in which case it has less rhetorical value than direct quoting. The connection that he established between paraphrasing and a sense of powerlessness naturally prevented him from fully exploring the potential rhetorical functions that can be achieved through paraphrasing.

Like Chuck, the rest of the participants also demonstrated a clear preference for direct quoting (for reasons that may differ from Chuck's). Unlike Chuck, who only selected one or two sentences to quote, some participants tended to use longer chunks of quotes in their research papers. Believing that direct quoting can be used in almost all

situations, all participants except Chuck would quote the information that they considered relevant to what they themselves were writing about, resulting in the overuse of excessively long quotes. Here are some examples:

> **Jake's short research paper**: according to the "Why rejection hurts" (I.Eisenberger,p179) "To explore whether social support reduces physical pain, we asked female participants to rate the unpleasantness of a series of painful heat stimuli delivered to their forearm as they performed anumber of different tasks. In one of these tasks ,participants received social support and in others they did not. We found that participants reported siganificantly less pain when holding their partner's hand than when they held a stranger's hand or a squeeze ball."

> **Wendy's short research paper**: "Restaurants were required to display grade cards that corresponded to their most recent government hygiene inspection. The large grade in the window—A, B, or C—honors restaurants that value cleanliness most and shames those that value it least. The grade cards have apparently led to increased customer sensitivity to restaurant hygiene, a 20 percent decrease in countywide hospitalizations for food-borne illnesses, and better hygiene scores for county restaurants"(p.136)

Lucia, for instance, believed that she should be extremely careful not to misrepresent any information taken from academic sources, since they are mostly based on carefully designed research. Because of this extra concern, Lucia concluded that she should use direct quoting when working with academic sources. In essence, she did not fully trust her ability to capture what was originally written. When writing up her long research paper about how stress may negatively affect people's health, Lucia produced the following paragraph that discussed the mental aspect of the negative effects caused by stress (direct quote is underlined).

> **Lucia's long research paper**: Secondly, stress has negative mental effects on human beings. As a physical statement that can drive people to behave anxious and distressed, stress definitely have some physical effects on human beings. <u>Daniela Kaufer and Darlene Francis (2011) describes "…Mind versus body and nature versus nurture. The first of these conceives of the workings of the mind as abstractions, implying that emotional states, such as distress, can exist as</u>

> nonphysical ailments of the psyche. The latter imagines a linear relationship in the construction of the individual, with the genome a static blueprint creating an organism that is then reshaped throughout its life by its experience." (P. 60).

As is shown in the paragraph, Lucia used a long quote to introduce the binaries of mind-body and nature-nurture. As she explained in the interview, Lucia decided to directly quote the information because of her concern about misrepresenting these academic terminologies. She was afraid that if she used her own words to explain these concepts, she would not be able to maintain the accuracy of information and retain the subtle details. (Interview, 12/3/2011) Despite the extra care Lucia took to maintain faithfulness to the source text material, the use of direct quotes here may cause confusion to readers, as Lucia did not explain how the concepts of mind-body and nature-nurture were connected to her topic about the negative mental effects caused by stress. As a result, the quote sounds quite disconnected from Lucia's topic sentence at the beginning of this paragraph. This lack of connection is also likely to make readers question the necessity of having such a long quote in this paragraph. In this sense, the quoted information failed to effectively serve the purpose of supporting Lucia's points. Furthermore, from a teacher's perspective, it may undermine confidence in Lucia's ability to work, as reader and writer, with source text material, as she could be perceived as adopting a kind of "avoidance" strategy. Paraphrasing this material would involve more intellectual work and paraphrasing skill, with Lucia choosing the simpler path.

Similar to Lucia, Helen chose to use direct quotes in order to maintain the accuracy of information. As she explained in the interviews, the points made by source text authors were usually complicated; therefore, making any slight change in wording

might twist the original meaning. Because of this, she decided to stick to the use of direct quotes when she needed to cite the authors' main points. The following paragraph clearly illustrates her thinking, with the quote underlined.

> **Helen's long research paper**: Besides raising body's efficiency and speed of reaction, short-term stress can decrease the possibility towards some diseases and strengthen the immune system. <u>The author of "Can Stress Actually be Good for You?" states that "People who experience moderate levels of stress before surgery have a better recovery than those with high or low levels, another study showed. Recently, a study suggested that stress could help prevent breast cancer because it suppresses the production of estrogen."(Weaver, 2006, para.10)</u>

As is shown in this short paragraph, Helen used a direct quote to introduce the source text author, Weaver's, point about how certain levels of stress can have positive effects on people. According to Helen, the reason why she decided to quote the two sentences from the source text instead of paraphrasing them was that the sentences contained statements made by the author, to whom she deferred rather than exercising her own agency as a writer. Although she acknowledged that she should be able to easily paraphrase these sentences, since the wording used was not that difficult, Helen believed that she needed to quote these sentences in order to make it clear to readers that they represented the source text author's opinions. (Interview, 11/29/2011)

Despite Helen's conscious efforts in maintaining the accuracy of the original author's point of view, using direct quotes to incorporate the two sentences from the source text is rather awkward, as they do not fit into the one signaling structure "The author of…states that". As is revealed in the interviews, Helen was aware of the need to use reporting verbs to introduce quoted information; what she was not aware of, however, was the fact that the two sentences from the original text already contained reporting

verbs themselves: “showed” and “suggested.” In other words, Helen did not realize that the source author, Weaver, was also working with other sources, and the choice of the reporting verbs “showed” and “suggested” to some extent represented Weaver’s interpretations of other authors. Because of the presence of the two reporting verbs, the quoted information remains in the voice of Weaver rather than that of Helen. In this sense, the direct quotes are not effectively integrated into Helen’s writing.

The above examples demonstrate L2 novice writers’ struggles with using direct quoting to incorporate source information. In the eyes of the participants, including the source text verbatim guarantees the accuracy as well as the authority of the information (and the original author’s voice), thus making direct quoting the safest and most effective tool to use for integrating source information. The students’ confidence in the effectiveness of direct quoting, however, did not always lead to the satisfactory outcomes they had desired. The participants’ short and long research papers clearly show that direct quotes were often overused or misused, as the quoted information did not fit into the context of the students’ writing. Simple as it may appear to be to use, direct quoting is in fact a complicated skill to master, one that goes beyond mere copying and pasting. Knowing what to quote directly, learning how to make the direct quotes work well with the material surrounding them, and understanding how much direct quoting is appropriate, are subskills of textual appropriation that take time and careful thought to acquire. For novice writers, what is in effect the avoidance strategy of excessive direct quoting, may serve as an appealing default mode when confronted with the challenges of paraphrasing.

6.2.2 Participant's reasons for using paraphrasing.

Compared with direct quoting, the L2 writers in the study seemed unable to find as many reasons for the use of paraphrasing to incorporate source information. The following list summarizes the situations where participants believed that paraphrasing should be used:

1. The original text is describing procedures of a research experiment.
2. The original text introduces a concept that needs further explanations.
3. The original text is easy to understand.
4. The original text uses simple wording.
5. The original text has a similar writing style as mine.
6. The original text is too long to be included verbatim.
7. Too many direct quotes have already been used in my paper.

The first two reasons are in nature similar to those that the students came up with for the use of direct quoting, in that they are both about specific situations. As the participants explained in the interviews, new to the concept of paraphrasing, they were in fact uncertain about the situations where paraphrasing should be used. Although the concept of paraphrasing was introduced and practiced in class, the key question about when to use paraphrasing never seemed to have been addressed. As a result, the students had to rely on themselves to generate certain rules to guide their paraphrasing practices for the research paper assignments. One easy way to do this, naturally, is to categorize the source texts based on the types of content they feature. Coco, for example, explained that she would choose to paraphrase the source text if it is about the procedures of a research

experiment. According to her, the source author would often describe the procedures in detail, but she did not think that she needed to be equally detailed, since the results of the experiment would be more important for her to report. (Interview, 12/3/2011) The following is an example of Coco's use of paraphrasing to describe experiment procedures, with the paraphrase underlined.

> **Coco's long research paper**: People tend to perform what their group supposes them to do, so they can keep relationship with their group or they will feel shame. Solomon Asch provides a good experiment of how group pressure makes one change his or her behavior. In the experiment, eight participants are shown two boards that one board has a standard line and the other has three comparison lines and they are asked to answer aloud which comparison line has same length as standard line. Only one of the group who is the fifth to answer the question is a real participant and others are confederates which the real participant unaware of that. In the beginning, the confederates are telling the correct answer, but they begin to tell wrong answer later. To the researcher surprised, the only real participant also tells the wrong answer after the confederates. Most participants attend this experiments follow the wrong answer provided by the confederates and the larger the size of confederates the more likely the real participant follow the wrong answer (Scott, Steven, Laura & Nancy, 2011, p.501).

The original source that Coco used was a textbook where the experiment was explained in detail, with step-by-step descriptions and statistics provided. Coco decided that she did not need to be as specific as the original source author; therefore, she chose to only introduce the principal design of the study and the major results. Coco's intention to condense the information about the experiment was commendable, and her choice of using paraphrasing instead of direct quoting to achieve this intention could be considered appropriate (one may argue that summarizing may be the best technique to use here); yet, the criterion that Coco established for using paraphrasing was quite problematic. Rather than recognizing the general rhetorical function of paraphrasing in allowing her to work with source information in a flexible way, Coco concluded that she should use

paraphrasing whenever she encountered a source text about research experiments. This narrow understanding inevitably limited Coco's use of paraphrasing as a tool to achieve flexibility when she interacted with source texts in general.

The rest of the reasons on the list seem to demonstrate an even narrower conceptualization of the usefulness of paraphrasing. Reasons 3 to 5 all focus on the level of linguistic complexity of source texts. The participants believed that they should paraphrase only when the source texts were easy to understand, used simple wording and had a similar writing style as theirs. As Helen put it, for example, "I only paraphrase information that is originally presented in simple wording, because first of all I need to be sure that I fully understand the source information, and second I can restate the same information in a similar style." (Interview, 10/25/2011) When asked if it was common for them to find source materials written in simple wording, all the participants acknowledged that their sources were mostly formally written articles which were filled with technical terms and displayed an elevated writing style. Aware of these major differences between source texts and their own writing, the participants thus concluded that paraphrasing was not a particularly useful technique. As Vera explained, "Most of my source texts are academic articles, and they are written in such an elegant style. If I use my own words, it sounds silly and not sophisticated at all. So I don't really think paraphrasing is that helpful." (Interview, 11/30/2011) Chuck expressed a similar concern: "I think I have confidence in my paraphrases when the source text is written in a similar writing style as mine. The problem is, normally the writing style of the source text is beyond my level." (Interview, 12/7/2011) Vera's and Chuck's worries are quite common

among all the participants. As novice academic writers writing in a second language, the students feel intimidated when working with source materials written in an elevated style, and by expert writers. They were so impressed by the formal vocabulary and complex sentence structures used in the source texts that they felt a strong desire to keep the original wording in their papers. Thus, direct quoting served as the most appealing default mode for them. Relative to their developmental trajectory with respect to academic writing in English, opting for direct quoting over paraphrasing was perhaps an understandable strategy, with avoidance of paraphrasing being the easier path to follow. This is another point that L2 writing teachers need to understand when providing instruction about paraphrasing.

It is certainly understandable for novice L2 writers to defer to the source texts written by experienced academic writers; however, the stylistic concerns of the students often get in the way of interacting with the source information itself. Wendy, for example, encountered this problem while working on the research paper assignments. During the interviews, Wendy said that she felt pressured to quote the information taken from source texts because of her awareness of the gap between her linguistic competence and that of the source authors. She believed that keeping the elegant wording of the source authors would somehow elevate her own writing and add credibility to it. What is worth noting here, however, is that the "elegant wording" in Wendy's eyes is probably not that elegant to an experienced writer. The following example is a case in point.

When working on her long research paper about the benefits brought about by digital footprints, Wendy wrote a paragraph which introduces how the digital trails could

be used to help government and other agencies to better monitor public safety. At the end of the paragraph, she quoted the following sentence: “the government or law enforcement agencies could identify members of a protest group by tracking social networks revealed by the new technology” (Richardson, 2008, para. 3). When asked for the reasons why she decided to use direct quoting here, Wendy explained that she thought the “by” structure was well used in the original sentence. According to her, if she had paraphrased the information, she would have used two simple sentences, which would sound less sophisticated. (Interview, 12/6/2011) For Wendy, the “by” structure, which is an extremely common structure in the eyes of a more experienced writer, characterizes the formal and elegant style of the source text and serves as a legitimate reason for her to choose direct quoting over paraphrasing. Although Wendy’s awareness of the high-level writing of the source text author reflects her gradual learning of the conventions of academic writing, her attention to the linguistic dimension of the source materials limited her from interacting with the content of the source texts in a meaningful way. As she admitted in the interviews, she rarely thought about whether the direct quotes that she included in her papers would make sense to readers and whether she needed to introduce and explain the quotes to contextualize them. Accordingly, she had never considered using paraphrasing as a tool to help her effectively explain the information contained in the quotes. (Interview, 12/6/2011) In this sense, her linguistic awareness resulted in a rather narrow understanding of the purposes of incorporating source information in her own writing and prevented her from truly interacting with source texts.

Wendy's case is quite representative of all the participants in the study. New to English academic writing, these novice L2 writers had little or no knowledge about why they were required to work with source texts for research paper writing and how to do it. As they attempted to demystify the conventions of academic writing, they would naturally rely on what they were able to observe in the so-called academic texts: the linguistic complexity of the original sentences. Although the awareness of the linguistic features of academic texts reflects their learning about academic writing, it is important for L2 students to go beyond the linguistic dimension in order to interact with source texts in a more meaningful way, rhetorically speaking. However, this transition from the linguistic to the rhetorical dimension is a challenging one, as the data presented in this section illustrate.

The last two reasons on the list, reasons 6 and 7, may disappoint all L2 writing instructors, who spend countless hours teaching paraphrasing. Eight out of the nine participants, with Chuck being the only exception, explicitly stated that they would use paraphrasing in their writing only when they *had* to, that is, when the original text was too long for them to be included in their papers verbatim or when they had already used quite a few direct quotes. They preferred what was called the 'avoidance strategy' earlier. Roger, for example, explained that he was aware that using too many quotes would make his papers sound like patchwork and that he would use paraphrasing to reduce such an impression on the readers. (Interview, 10/24/2011) Jake noted that he would use paraphrasing and quoting interchangeably to help vary his language structures. (Interview, 12/2/2011) Coco said that she would use paraphrasing when the information

she wanted to include in her papers was too long to quote directly (Interview, 12/3/2011). All these answers clearly demonstrate the participants' reluctance to use paraphrasing to incorporate source information into their writing and their general unawareness of the important rhetorical purposes that can be achieved through the use of paraphrasing.

Not recognizing the rhetorical functions that paraphrasing can achieve, the participants considered this particular way of text appropriation simply as an alternative to direct quoting, a more challenging and risky alternative. Interestingly, all the participants directly or indirectly mentioned their concerns about plagiarism in association with paraphrasing. To them, paraphrasing is a risky strategy to use because it could easily get them into the trap of plagiarism. As Jake stated in one of the interviews, "paraphrasing is like crossing a really narrow bridge, and I have to be super careful not to fall off." (Interview, 10/18/2011) Even the best writer, Chuck, was worried about the accusation of plagiarism. Although he had been very successful with the short paraphrasing exercises in class, Chuck was still reluctant to use this technique for research paper writing because of his concerns about plagiarism. In one of the interviews, Chuck expressed his uncertainty about the boundary between paraphrasing and plagiarizing: "In the past, I thought plagiarism was taking other people's work without their agreement. But here, plagiarism is more than this. If our paraphrases are not appropriate, we could be considered plagiarizing. The problem is, I am not always sure whether my paraphrases are appropriate or not." (Interview, 12/7/2011) New to the concept of paraphrasing, Chuck was surprised to discover the variety of behaviors related to it that could lead him to be accused of plagiarism. Naturally, he became extremely

cautious about the way in which he restated the source text information. Despite his efforts, Chuck still felt insecure about the criteria used to evaluate a paraphrase. For example, when asked how he would make sure that the wording of his paraphrases did not look similar to that of the source texts, Chuck shook his head and said: “I try my best, but honestly speaking, I don’t think I am the one to make the judgment here.” (Interview, 12/7/2011)

This sense of powerlessness was shared by the rest of the participants. Although in class they were introduced to the general guidelines used to assess the appropriateness of a paraphrase (e.g., no more than three consecutive words from the source text should be kept in a paraphrase), these novice L2 writers found it difficult to apply these general guidelines to specific writing situations. Jake, for instance, questioned the “three-word rule”: “I don’t think I can always follow this rule. For example, if I want to introduce a person’s date of birth, I don’t know another way other than ‘somebody was born on this day’. How can I paraphrase this?” (Interview, 10/18/2011) Jake’s concern was shared by the rest of the participants. These novice L2 writers, who were still developing their language proficiency in English, often found it difficult to identify a different way to express the same meaning, thus leading them to conclude that certain source texts were “unparaphrasable”. The risky and challenging nature of paraphrasing naturally resulted in the participants’ reluctance to actively use the technique in their own writing. This concern was compounded by the rhetorical functions of paraphrasing that went beyond the linguistically-oriented concerns they had.

6.3 Summary

As the above analysis shows, the novice L2 writers in this study were generally unaware of the rhetorical purposes and functions that can be achieved through the use of paraphrasing, or were reluctant to fully engage them when they were aware of them. To them, working with source texts equates with reporting what the source text authors have to say, especially in the original authors' own words. Without contextualizing their paraphrases and explaining the connections between the paraphrases and their claims, the participants in the study struggled to utilize paraphrasing to its full potential, especially as a rhetorical device. This lack of rhetorical understanding also led the participants to favor direct quoting over paraphrasing in most situations they encountered. In the eyes of these students, both quoting and paraphrasing can be used to report source information, and of the two, quoting is a much safer and more efficient tool to use. In this sense, how to help L2 writers develop a fuller understanding of paraphrasing as a rhetorical tool to effectively interact with source texts and construct one's own arguments in writing is an issue L2 writing instructors may need to address. This requires avoiding an undue emphasis on the linguistic dimension of paraphrasing and understanding the challenges involved in students' transition from the linguistic to the rhetorical dimension.

Chapter 7: Discussion and Conclusion

The present study documented a group of novice L2 writers' engagement with the learning of paraphrasing in an undergraduate EAP writing course. Re-examining the taken-for-granted concept of paraphrasing within the linguistic, rhetorical and cultural dimensions, I seek to provide an emic perspective that is currently missing in second language writing literature as related to paraphrasing. That is, most prior research in this area has examined the *results* of students' attempts at paraphrasing, while this study set out to investigate how nine novice L2 academic writers *experienced the process* of learning to paraphrase. In the eyes of accomplished academic writers, paraphrasing is probably a simple and basic writing task, and one whose value they recognize; yet, for novice L2 writers, who are new to English academic writing, paraphrasing is a culturally-shaped act that can cause them significant difficulties as they attempt to make sense of what paraphrasing is and why they are expected to use it for their own writing purposes. By looking closely at the linguistic, rhetorical, and cultural dimensions of paraphrasing, the study attempted to generate a more comprehensive portrait of what happens when novice L2 academic writers are confronted with a writing practice that is new both conceptually and in technical terms to them.

Expectedly, L2 writers would struggle with paraphrasing at the linguistic level, as they are still developing their English proficiency. What is often overlooked, however, is how these learners wrestle with paraphrasing at a conceptual level (and thus a rhetorical level as well). As Chapter Four showed, coming from a different rhetorical and cultural background, the participants in my study struggled to understand the values and purposes of paraphrasing while negotiating between their previous literacy experiences and the new expectations in English academic writing. In this sense, paraphrasing functioned as a kind of gate-keeping tool that prevented the students from fully interacting with their sources. On the surface, the participants seemed to have demonstrated a basic understanding of paraphrasing; at a deeper level, however, the learners revealed a general confusion about the reasons behind this practice and a deep distrust of what it can achieve for their own purposes. Lacking a sense of conviction about its importance, the participants of this study were only able to engage paraphrasing at a superficial level, and this appeared to prevent them from making highly motivated or focused attempts to gain full command of various paraphrasing techniques. They did it mainly because they were expected to and were successful with it to varying degrees across the nine participants, but there was no sense of the participants developing a deeper level of engagement with paraphrasing.

Drawing on the findings presented in the previous chapters, in this chapter I will put those findings in perspective by addressing the study's research questions and exploring the contributions these results make to the L2 writing field's knowledge and understanding of paraphrasing. I will then discuss possible implications for L2 writing

pedagogy emerging from the study as well as suggestions for future research on paraphrasing.

7.1 Revisiting the Research Questions

Research question one: How are international undergraduate students socialized into the practice of paraphrasing in the ESL composition course?

Paraphrasing is not simply a mechanical or technical process by which original sentences from source texts can be rearranged; it is also, at a deeper level, a way of treating words and ideas as a culture views intellectual property, in this case Anglophone culture. As a result, academic writing courses like the one featured in this study attempt to do more than simply show students how to work with an author's words at the linguistic level. They also strive to socialize students into new ways of thinking about words and content. Hence, the first research question was designed to investigate the socialization process at work in this course as well as students' responses to it in line with the study's theoretical underpinning within an academic socialization framework.

As an important component of the writing curriculum, paraphrasing was taught and practiced throughout the term. Since the primary goal of the course was to familiarize novice L2 writers with source-based writing and general academic writing conventions, paraphrasing was introduced as one of the three ways (the other two being quoting and summarizing) that students could use to incorporate sources into their writing. At the beginning of the term, the students were first introduced to the definition of paraphrasing, the common strategies for paraphrasing, and the general criteria used to evaluate the quality of a paraphrase. They were also given explanations for why paraphrasing matters,

conceptually, in academic writing in English, although such explanations were rather limited. They were then provided with regular in-class exercises to practice paraphrasing as an initial attempt at scaffolding their understanding of paraphrasing. These exercises mostly required students to paraphrase a sentence or two taken from their weekly readings. As the data has shown, the instruction on paraphrasing was largely centered around the alteration of wording, thus conceptualizing paraphrasing initially as a linguistically oriented activity. Thus, from an academic socialization perspective, the students were being socialized at a somewhat superficial level, even during their research paper assignments.

Although the instructor acknowledged the challenging nature of paraphrasing and provided ample opportunities for students to practice paraphrasing in class, her instruction was not as well received as it could have been because of the gap between the knowledge and assumptions that she held as an experienced academic reader and writer and those that the novice L2 writers held as outsiders of the academic community. At the linguistic level, for example, the instructor clearly explained the common strategies used to produce effective paraphrases, but did not deconstruct such strategies as "use synonyms", which caused confusion on the students' part. At the rhetorical level, the instructor believed that paraphrasing should be used strategically to achieve larger rhetorical purposes in source-based writing and expected the students to do this in their research papers; yet, she did not explicitly discuss the major rhetorical functions that paraphrasing can achieve in writing, leaving the students to figure out the reasons for using paraphrasing in their writing. At the cultural level, the instructor observed that the

students' understanding of paraphrasing seemed to be different from the common expectations in the English academic context, but she was unaware that these Chinese students' different understanding of paraphrasing was closely related to their previous literacy experiences in Chinese writing.

With such mismatches occurring at all three levels, the instruction on paraphrasing, which was clear from the instructor's perspective, sounded vague and abstract to the novice L2 academic writers in the study. Thus, from their perspective, there was not a lot of socialization taking place. The gap between the instructor's assumptions about what the students knew and what the students actually knew contributed to the difficulties that the students experienced as they attempted to make sense of the (to them) strange practice of paraphrasing. The students seemed to sense that they were being socialized into a new way of looking at source text material and thus hoped to be given a workable conceptual framework that put paraphrasing into a larger and clearer perspective, while the instructor seemed unaware of their desire for more conceptually-oriented explanations. In short, they seemed to be seeking more academic socialization than the instructor was providing. What this suggests is that the instructor appeared to significantly underestimate the complexities of the socialization process, resulting in an important gap between her and the students as the course progressed.

The findings of this study regarding the instruction on paraphrasing have pointed to the need for L2 writing instructors to re-examine taken-for-granted cultural assumptions and to see paraphrasing through the eyes of their L2 students in order to generate a more meaningful level of academic socialization. That is, they need to

recognize the cultural aspects of the socialization process and not treat it primarily as a linguistic exercise. As Macbeth (2004) maintains, novice L2 writers lack the cultural assumptions and background knowledge necessary for them to fully understand the purposes and outcomes of certain writing practices; as a result, they are often only able to interpret the instruction in a rather superficial manner, thus rendering the socialization process fragmented and incomplete. Academic writing courses are in fact a "cultural curriculum" built upon tacit assumptions shared by members of the academic community (Macbeth, 2010).

As outsiders, novice L2 writers often do not share such assumptions and have to rely on limited resources that they have at hand to manage cultural expectations associated with academic writing. In the case of the teaching of paraphrasing, it is clear that students' confusion about paraphrasing is closely connected to their unfamiliarity with the larger genre of source-based writing, the task of which is filled with cultural assumptions specific to the academic community. Coming from a different rhetorical and cultural background, the novice L2 writers in this study were not used to working with sources in the way that is expected in the academic context. They had no relevant academic socialization background to draw upon or to transfer to the new writing environment they were in. Lacking an appropriate academic socialization schema in their L1 background, they needed meaningful input regarding L2 academic socialization. That is, they needed an approach to instruction that was more attuned to the socialization process from their point of view and not the teacher’s.

As the findings have revealed, the source texts did not play any role in the pre-writing stage where the participants were brainstorming ideas. In fact, it was not until the students had formed their personal opinions about a certain topic that they turned to the library databases to find sources that aligned with their opinions. Consequently, what the students produced were personal essays disguised in the genre of research papers, for which the sources only played a decorative role. On the surface, the students seemed to have developed the ability to use sources for their writing; at a conceptual level, however, their understanding of source-based writing was still far away from what was truly expected of them in the academic context. In short, they were far from socialized into this important writing practice, and yet it was seemingly expected or assumed by the teacher that this socialization had occurred.

The challenges that these novice L2 writers encountered in learning to paraphrase were related to their unfamiliarity with the expectations associated with source-based writing, expectations that are at the heart of academic socialization. This "pretended socialization" has been documented by a few scholars researching novice L2 academic writers' engagement with source-based writing. Leki (2007), for example, described how one of her participants, Jan, developed a rather uninvolved relationship with source texts while writing up his research paper. Instead of directing his attention to more important aspects of the paper, i.e., looking for more sources and developing an argument, Jan was busy making superficial linguistic changes to his paper to "massage the piece until it could not be easily accused of being an example of the plagiarism he felt it would be taken for" (Leki, 2007, p. 143).

In a similar vein, Harwoord and Petric (2012) illustrated how two successful L2 postgraduate students, Sofie and Tara, utilized their citation practices to leave a favorable impression on their instructors and achieve practical purposes, that is, getting good grades. Rather than critically and analytically interact with source texts for ideas and argument construction, both students chose sources that they believed would please the instructor. The two students also inflated their reference list to project the image of hard-working students. Thus, they, too, engaged in this "pretended socialization" process, suggesting that at a deeper level, productive instructional efforts to achieve academic socialization either failed or were not attempted.

Although such practices of these novice L2 writers may be considered "survival strategies" (Leki, 2007, p. 142) on which ESL students can rely to complete demanding academic writing tasks, or "performances" (Harwood & Petric, 2012) that mark L2 students' efforts to participate in academic tasks, their narrow understanding of the roles that source texts play in constructing a paper inevitably resulted in a rather superficial relationship with source texts and such subskills as paraphrasing.

Interpreting the expectations associated with source-based writing is certainly not an easy task, especially for novice L2 academic writers who are new to the academic context and lacking in the necessary background to chart the unknown land. Yet how the students understand the requirements and expectations of source-based writing can directly influence how they engage in source-based writing assignments. As Kantz (1990) explains, "A writing-from-sources task can be as simple as collating a body of facts" (p. 76), as what many of the participants of this study did in their research papers, but "it can

also involve applying abstract concepts from one area to an original problem in a different area, a task that involves learning the relationship among materials " (p. 76). To help novice L2 writers develop a deeper and clearer understanding of such textual appropriation strategies as paraphrasing, writing instructors need to provide guidance to facilitate L2 learners' exploration of the larger cultural practice of working with sources for writing purposes. Only in this way can truly meaningful socialization occur as related to paraphrasing.

In terms of the effectiveness of the exercises about paraphrasing, it is evident that short, decontextualized paraphrasing tasks of the kind the participants completed in the course are not particularly helpful for novice L2 writers to develop a conceptual understanding of paraphrasing. Rather than promoting socialization, they prevent it. Although ESL students certainly need to be provided with opportunities to practice rephrasing source information through the use of common strategies (e.g., using synonyms, changing sentence structures, etc.), decontextualized short paraphrasing exercises tend to reduce paraphrasing to a mechanical process of linguistically dissembling and reassembling source texts. With all their attention directed to making local linguistic changes (which is a challenging enough task), the novice L2 writers naturally conceptualized paraphrasing as a linguistic activity rather than a writing tool that could achieve important rhetorical functions. In this sense, the short paraphrasing exercises have lost the forest for the trees, with the forest being the real uses of paraphrasing and the trees being the linguistic procedures involved in the production of a paraphrase.

Although the instructor had in mind that the ultimate goal of teaching paraphrasing was to help students develop the ability to effectively apply the skill to their writing, which entails sufficient understanding of the importance and value of paraphrasing, the use of decontextualized paraphrasing exercises did not help to achieve this goal. She may have paid lip service to this kind of understanding by occasionally mentioning the importance of paraphrasing, but there was never an attempt to generate a meaningful conceptual framework for the act of paraphrasing. In other words, there was no genuine attempt at socialization as related to paraphrasing. Macbeth (2010) cites what she calls a “curriculum of judgment” as the possible cause of the gap between what the students need and what a teacher provides as a result of the unspoken assumptions guiding teachers’ instruction that students from other cultures are unable to decipher. Academic socialization as reflected in an act like paraphrasing carries with it certain unstated cultural assumptions about the importance of words and ideas, and, as Macbeth (2010) points out, teachers who already know those cultural assumptions may fail to recognize that these assumptions are not transparent to students coming from different cultural backgrounds. Thus, decontextualized paraphrasing exercises fail to reveal to the students what they need to know about the cultural elements at work in expectations surrounding paraphrasing.

To help novice L2 writers develop a more meaningful understanding of paraphrasing, contextualized exercises where they actually practice using paraphrasing to interact with source texts and achieve certain purposes in writing are needed, especially when accompanied by teacher explanations which identify and demystify the cultural

components at work in paraphrasing. This is where real academic socialization can take place. The nature of the writing tasks assigned to students is critical for their successful socialization into the target academic community, since it is through these specific writing tasks that novice L2 writers gradually develop their understanding of the expectations associated with academic writing. An important point in this regard is that different types of writing tasks may result in, or require, varying degrees of socialization. Yamada (2002), for example, shows that source-based writing tasks which required a higher level of inferential thinking encouraged students to engage with source texts at a deeper level and led them to rely less on the wording of source texts. With regard to the teaching and learning of paraphrasing, exercises that encourage novice L2 writers to actively interact with source texts are essential in helping students visualize the rhetorical functions that paraphrasing can achieve in writing, thus motivating them to use the skill for their own writing purposes. Although it may seem reasonable and attractive for writing instructors to focus on the linguistic aspect of paraphrasing given ESL students' developing English proficiency, the principal objectives for the tasks assigned in a writing classroom should be to socialize these novice L2 writers into the "strange land" (McCarthy, 1987) of academic culture. This overarching goal of academic socialization should be reflected in the paraphrasing tasks that novice L2 writers are assigned so that the students do not conceptualize paraphrasing as just another linguistic exercise imposed on them, resulting in little or no academic socialization on their part.

Research question two: How do ESL undergraduate students understand the practice of paraphrasing in English academic writing?

Consistent with the emic perspective on paraphrasing that this study seeks to provide, the purpose of this research question was to examine how the participants constructed their understanding of paraphrasing. New to the concept of paraphrasing and source-based writing, the novice L2 writers in the study expressed their unfamiliarity with and confusion about this strategy for textual appropriation. Understandably, they turned to their previous literacy experiences in Chinese for help, since this was the frame of reference they knew best. As the participants reported, in Chinese writing, they were rarely expected to work with sources, but were encouraged to directly quote proverbs, idioms and classic poems in their essays. According to them, keeping the exact wording of source texts was important, because the unique wording was the reason why the sources were worth citing in the first place. If the wording was changed, then the reader would likely to get the impression that the writer was not knowledgeable and competent enough. Hence, given their cultural and rhetorical upbringing, for these students paraphrasing was not only a new practice but one that, in a sense, violated or contradicted what they had previously been told about working with sources. Also, because of this view of sources from their L1 background, the participants focused on linguistic elegance in their Chinese writing. To them, style seemed to be the most important feature that distinguished between good and bad writing in Chinese. This was a view of writing that they carried into their L2 writing experiences.

This understanding about citing sources based on their L1 writing experiences influenced how the participants conceptualized paraphrasing. In the eyes of the novice L2 writers, paraphrasing was a much less useful strategy than direct quoting, since the latter

would guarantee accuracy, credibility and style at the same time. Believing that their paraphrases would not match up to the source texts written by experienced academic writers with expertise in a particular subject matter, the participants felt quite reluctant to use paraphrasing in their research paper writing. As the participants explained, they would not choose to paraphrase unless they absolutely had to (e.g., they had used too many direct quotes in the same paragraph, the source texts were too long to be directly quoted, etc.). In other words, it was their last choice, and one they would make reluctantly, an important perspective that their teacher seemed unaware of. Despite the students' belief in the effectiveness of direct quoting, the extensive use of quoting resulted in unnecessary block quotes, which often interrupted the flow of their own writing, a point the students failed to recognize.

Although the participants' use of excessive direct quotations to incorporate source information may seem inconsistent with the expectations of academic writing, this particular practice may in fact reflect the developmental trajectories that they need to go through in acquiring the linguistically, rhetorically and culturally demanding task of textual appropriation. As Petric (2012) argues, "overuse of quotation fragments may be a necessary stage in the development of academic literacy and acquisition of a disciplinary discourse, following the patchwriting stage" (p. 114). Petric's (2012) study of high-rated and low-rated MA theses written by second language students clearly demonstrated the use of quotation fragments as a strategy for novice L2 writers to integrate source information into their writing for the purpose of argument construction. In this sense, writing instructors could use direct quotation as a springboard to help novice L2 writers

transition into the more challenging task of paraphrasing. As Petric (2012) reminds us, simple as it may sound, “direct quotation is not a uniform textual practice” (p. 114). Writing instructors can thus provide L2 students with opportunities to practice selecting quotation fragments, weaving the quotes into their papers, and comparing the different levels of success with regard to the different ways of using direct quotations both linguistically and rhetorically. By helping L2 writers develop a meaningful understanding of textual appropriation through the practice of direct quotation, writing instructors will likely find it easier to introduce and explain paraphrasing.

Another important factor that may have influenced the novice L2 writers' conceptualization of paraphrasing is their concern about plagiarism. As outsiders of the academic community, the L2 students were shocked to learn of the numerous actions that would lead to the accusation of plagiarism, and felt intimidated by the severe consequences that could result from such an accusation. Although the knowledge about plagiarism was helpful for the students to protect themselves in their negotiation with the unfamiliar writing conventions in the academic context, it also burdened them, preventing them from freely experimenting with paraphrasing. In other words, the aura of plagiarism created a stigma associated with paraphrasing and thus acted contrary to the instructor’s intentions in teaching about paraphrasing. As the participants explained, the top priority for them was to avoid plagiarism, and the quality of the papers naturally became a much less important concern. With their attention focused on avoiding plagiarism, the participants did not spend much time contemplating ways that could help them use the source texts in a more effective way. It was easier to simply plug in direct

quotes where they seemed appropriate. As a result, they were not prepared to engage the goals and processes associated with academic socialization as reflected in source text use. In this case, the rules associated with academic get in the way of the students' attempts to make sense of paraphrasing and source-based writing.

Although plagiarism is certainly an important issue to address in academic writing courses, recent research on second language writing has revealed that many cases of plagiarism are not because of L2 writers' intention to cheat, but due to their inability to accurately recognize instances that are considered plagiarism according to academic standards and appropriately paraphrase source texts (Abasi, Akbari and Graves, 2006; Roig, 1997). The purpose of academic writing courses, therefore, should be to facilitate novice L2 writers with the development of an appropriate understanding of paraphrasing and an adequate ability to do so. Providing a risk-free environment where L2 learners feel comfortable exploring the various conventions associated with paraphrasing is essential for these novices to grow into competent academic writers. As Macbeth (2010) showed in her study, risk taking is a key part of novice L2 writers' learning of "the curriculum of judgments" (p. 44) at work in a writing course. It is, she says, through taking risks that L2 learners develop the knowledge of "how far one may stray from the rules while still producing something recognizably like it" (p. 44), an understanding critical to a fuller command of the expectations of academic writing. In this sense, it is important for writing instructors to recognize novice L2 writers' "genuine hope for a pedagogy that would allow them to try and learn before they become competent writers" (Shi, 2006, p.

276), and to make sure that the rules that novice L2 writers are expected to learn do not get in the way of their actual learning.

It is also worth noting here that the novice L2 writers in this study demonstrated a sense of uncertainty about the criteria used to evaluate paraphrases, which added to their confusion about paraphrasing. Although the instructor introduced the general guidelines used to assess the quality of a paraphrase, the students felt unsure about how to actually use those guidelines to monitor the quality of their own paraphrases. Keenly aware of their status as outsiders of the academic community, the participants believed that they lacked the linguistic competence as well as content knowledge necessary to evaluate their own paraphrases. They sometimes felt that no matter how hard they tried to remain faithful to the source texts, their paraphrases would still be judged by an experienced academic writer, the instructor of the course in this case, as lacking in accuracy. This feeling of uncertainty and powerlessness led them to conclude that paraphrasing was too challenging a skill to use and thus not that useful. This finding is particularly important as related to the role that agency plays in helping novice members achieve successful socialization, as is emphasized by the language socialization framework (Garrett & Baquedano-Lopez, 2002). In the case of learning to paraphrase, novice L2 writers are expected to be socialized into a particular way of textual appropriation, and their lack of confidence in accurately evaluating their own paraphrases led them to passively reject the effectiveness of this strategy. Their motivation for exploring the usefulness of paraphrasing thus dwindled, and their agency in the socialization process was minimal. When learning academic writing, L2 students are in essence expected to play the "writing

games" of the academic community (Casanave, 2002). It is important for writing instructors to encourage L2 writers to assume agency in learning and motivate them to actively participate in the games.

Research question three: What are the general practices of ESL undergraduate writers when they are asked to paraphrase a short paragraph taken from their readings?

Another goal of this study was to identify how the participants actually approached paraphrasing. Because the paraphrasing exercises used in the course were an important part of the course earlier in the term, this research question was generated to account for that goal as related to the exercises. Throughout the term, the novice L2 writers were regularly assigned short exercises to practice the skill of paraphrasing. For these exercises, the students were asked to paraphrase a short paragraph taken from their weekly readings. Since the students were all quite familiar with the content of the weekly readings, they did not struggle much with reading comprehension when completing these paraphrasing exercises. Their attention was directed to the linguistic aspect of paraphrasing. In order to produce a paraphrase that would look different from the source texts, the participants experimented with the paraphrasing strategies introduced by the instructor in class, with some being more successful than others.

As second language learners who were unfamiliar with the academic register, the participants struggled with the short paraphrasing exercises at the linguistic level. With limited linguistic resources at their disposal, the novice L2 writers found it difficult to rephrase the source information in their own words while maintaining an academic style. The vocabulary they used in their paraphrases was generally less formal than that in the

source texts, and the sentence structures of the students' paraphrases were less complicated. At times, their paraphrases were also less concrete than the source texts, a result of the participants' lack of vocabulary. These results are consistent with Campbell's (1990) findings, and are probably expected given novice L2 writers' developing language proficiency in English.

What has not been revealed in the literature, however, is that the participants actively utilized their limited linguistic repertoire and their incomplete knowledge about academic writing to negotiate with the short paraphrasing exercises. Although the final products were not always as satisfactory as expected, the decisions that the students made during the paraphrasing processes were conscious ones that reflected their efforts to meet the expectations of English academic writing. In other words, at one level—the linguistic—the students did attempt to engage paraphrasing. Despite the awareness of their limited English proficiency, the participants actively attempted to imitate the writing style of the source texts by using large words and long sentences in their paraphrases. Their attempts, of course, did not always result in what they had desired: the words that they chose were inappropriately used, and the long sentences sometimes compromised the clarity of their paraphrases. Yet, these efforts still clearly marked their progress at one level of the developmental trajectory, and it is important for L2 writing instructors to be aware of and acknowledge such progress. Instead of only focusing on the final products when evaluating students' paraphrases, writing instructors should consciously look for cues in the paraphrases that mark students' growing awareness of academic writing. Such

knowledge will help instructors to develop a more accurate assessment of the students' level of writing and further decide on how to proceed with their teaching.

When applying the paraphrasing strategies introduced by the instructor, the participants demonstrated different levels of success. It appears that the students were more successful with the word form and sentence structure alteration strategies than the synonym replacement strategy. This may have to do with their grammatical competence developed through the grammar-oriented English lessons in China. As for the synonym replacement strategy, it is interesting to note that despite the students' enthusiasm about and confidence in this strategy, the outcomes were not as desirable as they had expected. Although the novice L2 writers actively used synonym dictionaries as resources, their lack of knowledge about the meaning of the synonyms and the sometimes subtle differences between the synonyms and the wording used in the source texts led them to choose synonyms that did not faithfully represent the ideas of the original texts. In addition, when using the synonym replacement strategy, the participants tended to focus only on one or two words at a time without paying attention to the overall meaning of the source texts. Consequently, their paraphrases sounded like patchworks piled up by synonyms with unclear focuses. In this sense, the synonym replacement strategy prevented the novice L2 writers from interacting with the source texts in a meaningful way.

When teaching paraphrasing, therefore, L2 writing instructors need to develop a more acute awareness of the specific difficulties that ESL writers encounter as related to the linguistic aspect of paraphrasing. Such seemingly self-evident strategies as "use

synonyms" in fact need some deconstruction in order for novice L2 writers to fully master them and apply them to achieve desirable outcomes. Apart from introducing to L2 students what the strategies are, writing instructors should also devote time and attention to how to *effectively* use the strategies. This requires writing teachers to challenge their assumptions as experienced members of the academic community and view such writing tasks as paraphrasing from the learners' perspective. As Gu and Brooks (2008) remind us:

> [W]hen we judge the practices of the ‘‘other” on the basis of our own practices, values and perceptions which we believe are the norm because they are shared by people around us and reinforced by the context in which we work and live, we may not see what we think we have seen (p. 344).

In the context of academic writing courses, teachers need to make sure that their own knowledge of and familiarity with the conventions as related to academic writing do not block them from seeing what the students see.

Another striking feature of the students' engagement with these short paraphrasing exercises is their general lack of awareness of making use of the larger writing context from which the short paragraphs used for the exercises were taken. When assigned the paraphrasing exercises, the participants tended to look at the short paragraphs only, without paying any attention to the book chapters from which the paragraphs were selected. That is, they read the paragraphs in isolation. As is revealed in the data, the source text authors, who were experienced academic writers, consciously provided contextual explanations needed for readers to understand key terms and concepts mentioned in a particular sentence. If the participants had turned to the chapters when

they struggled to understand certain terms and expressions when completing the short paraphrasing tasks, they would have easily found clues that clarified their confusion in the book chapters. Also, if they had looked at the sentences preceding or following the short paragraphs in the original chapters, they would also have seen the various means that the source text authors used to express the same meaning. In other words, the larger context from which the short paragraphs were selected provided valuable information that would not only help the participants better understand the information, but also facilitate them in their efforts at identifying alternative words and expressions to replace the wording of the source texts. However, the participants failed to utilize this valuable information.

What the participants failed to grasp was the reading side of paraphrasing; they looked at it strictly from the point of view of writing. As Kantz (1990) emphasizes, rhetorical reading ability is critical for novice academic writers to interact with source texts effectively. In the case of paraphrasing, the ability of "mining texts" (Greene, 1992) for content and linguistic is fundamental for novice L2 writers to produce successful paraphrases. Therefore, it is important for L2 writing instructors to take into consideration the role that reading plays in helping the students with their paraphrasing endeavors. After all, paraphrasing is a skill that requires a high level of both reading and writing competence. Without an appropriate understanding of the effective ways to interact with texts, the students will be unable to fully master the skill of paraphrasing.

Research question four: How do L2 undergraduate writers utilize paraphrasing in source-based writing assignments?

This research question is an extension of the purpose underlying the third question: to penetrate into the paraphrasing practices by examining how novice L2 writers paraphrased in different context, in this case while writing their own papers. During the writing course, the novice L2 writers engaged in two major source-based writing assignments: a 2-3 page short research paper where they were expected to work with at least two sources, and a seven-page long research paper for which they were required to work with a minimum of four sources. For these two assignments, the participants were encouraged to use all three source-based writing strategies—summarizing, quoting and paraphrasing—when incorporating source information into their essays.

The students of the study revealed a general reluctance to apply the skill of paraphrasing to their writing. When they did use paraphrasing to incorporate source information, their paraphrases often did not achieve the desirable rhetorical purposes expected by the instructor. For example, the students' paraphrases sometimes lacked the background information necessary for the reader to understand the sources. This indicates that these novice L2 writers still seemed to view paraphrasing as a decontextualized practice, for which they only needed to rephrase a small chunk of text without having to consider the larger context where the paraphrase would appear. With such an understanding in mind, the students did not bother to check whether the paraphrased information actually made sense to the reader, who possibly had not read the complete articles from which the paraphrased information was taken. Along the same lines, the participants often provided insufficient explanations related to their paraphrases, thus leaving the reader to figure out the connections between the paraphrased information and

the students’ arguments. As the data has revealed, the participants would simply insert a paraphrase in a paragraph without explaining why the paraphrased information occurred in the first place. In this sense, the skill of paraphrasing, which should help the students to better explain the source information and connect it to their own points, weakens the overall flow and coherence of the L2 students’ writing.

The reluctance that the participants demonstrated with regard to the use of paraphrasing as a tool for their writing can be partly explained by the challenging nature of paraphrasing itself and the students' lack of confidence in utilizing this skill. Yet another important reason for their reluctance was their unawareness of the rhetorical purposes that could be achieved through the use of paraphrasing. As is revealed in the data, the Chinese students felt confused about having to use their own words to restate information already well explained by authors who were much more knowledgeable than them. This confusion probably has to do with the participants' previous experiences in Chinese writing, from which they developed the understanding that citing something verbatim is essential for conveying the authority of the source text authors and demonstrating the competence of these authors as respected writers. With this understanding in mind, the participants believed that using paraphrasing in most cases would result in a loss of both authority and elegance.

Balancing between their beliefs about the ineffectiveness of paraphrasing and the instructor's expectation for them to use the skill in their research papers, the participants developed tentative strategies as solutions. Some of them decided to only paraphrase source texts that were written in a simple style similar to theirs so that the loss of the

elegant writing style was not a problem. Others concluded that they should only paraphrase source texts that were not academic in nature so that the authority of the source texts did not get lost. These strategies that the participants developed have revealed a rather negative attitude that these novice L2 writers had developed towards paraphrasing. Instead of seeing it as a tool that would help them achieve rhetorical purposes in writing, as was expected by the instructor, the students seemed to have conceptualized paraphrasing as a practice that forced them to tear apart something that was already nicely written. This ran counter to what they had learned about source texts in their L1 cultural and rhetorical upbringing in China.

Academic writing classrooms are indeed where various levels of culture intersect, and the teaching and learning of academic concepts and practices are in essence a form of intercultural communication (Connor, 2011). In the case of paraphrasing, it is evident that the novice L2 writers' L1 literacy experiences with textual appropriation, their idiosyncratic interpretations of what was required of them as related to paraphrasing, and the teacher's assumptions as an experienced academic reader and writer and her expectations of the students all played a role in the L2 students' engagement with paraphrasing. To provide effective instruction, consequently, it is essential for writing instructors to re-examine the concept of paraphrasing from the learners' perspective and try to understand how their cultural heritage may influence the way in which they make sense of paraphrasing. It could be especially helpful for teachers to determine whether students' existing L1 schema for paraphrasing is likely to play a debilitating or a facilitating role in their acquisition of paraphrasing skills in English.

In the eyes of these novice L2 writers, paraphrasing was simply an alternative to direct quoting, a challenging and risky alternative that did not seem to have any special value. The participants believed that they could use direct quoting to easily achieve the purposes of paraphrasing without having to take the risk of being accused of plagiarism. Although the instructor of the course introduced in class the limited situations where direct quoting should be used, the students came up with more reasons for themselves to use direct quoting in their research paper writing. Many of these reasons had to do with the participants' attempts to maintain the authority of the cited information. For example, some of the participants would choose to quote information taken from academic articles because they believed that it was important to keep the exact wording to convey the sense of authority associated with the information. Other reasons, however, were more practical in nature. The students would use direct quoting as an avoidance strategy to compensate for their insufficient English proficiency. According to the participants, direct quoting was a handy tool to use when the source texts were too difficult to understand or paraphrase. Viewing direct quoting as an avoidance strategy, the participants utilized it as a shortcut to the completion of the demanding task of textual appropriation. Although these decisions that the novice L2 writers made about choosing direct quotations over paraphrasing reflected their agency as participants of the academic community, they also clearly marked their outsider status. Without guidance and help from the insiders, these novice L2 writers' journey to becoming competent academic writers will be unnecessarily arduous, as implicated by Lave and Wenger's concept of legitimate peripheral participation (1991).

What this study has revealed is the novice L2 writers' superficial understanding of the roles that paraphrasing could play in their writing, once again suggesting that there had been no real socializing into paraphrasing. This is certainly related to their unfamiliarity with this particular skill; yet, a larger issue that needs to be considered is the students' unawareness of the importance of interacting as readers-writers with source materials. When working on their research papers, the participants did not engage in such analytical processes as synthesizing, critiquing and reorganizing; what they did was simply move certain information, either through quoting or paraphrasing, from the source texts to their papers. Often times, the participants expected that the selected information would speak for itself and magically make their writing better. In order to help these novice L2 writers improve their paraphrasing skills and develop a more engaging relationship with paraphrasing, it is critical for writing instructors to start with the reading materials first and provide opportunities for students to practice interacting with texts. It is not until they understand the importance of critically and analytically processing source information for their own writing purposes that the students will truly appreciate the skill of paraphrasing.

7.2 Pedagogical Implications

Although paraphrasing is conceptualized as an important skill for novice L2 writers to learn in the academic context and is included in most EAP courses as an essential component of the curriculum, the attention it gets in actual classroom instruction tends to be quite limited. It appears that decontextualized paraphrasing exercises are often used, and little time is spent demystifying what paraphrasing is. Such a teaching approach

portrays paraphrasing as an easy-to-learn and culturally neutral skill, thus concealing the complexities that it involves to truly engage in the activity of paraphrasing. As Macbeth (2010) argues, when learning to write academically, L2 writers are indeed engaged in a cultural curriculum that requires constant interpreting and judgment making. What seems obvious to the insiders of the academic community may be utterly strange to novice L2 writers; even the seemingly simple activity of following instruction is a cultural practice (Macbeth, 2010). To improve the effectiveness of instruction, it is critical for writing instructors to adopt a learner's perspective and re-examine tacit assumptions taken for granted by experienced academic writers. In this section, I will discuss pedagogical implications based on the findings of this study about paraphrasing and source-based writing.

One of the main implications of this study has to do with the importance of incorporating the element of culture in the teaching of paraphrasing. As the findings have shown, paraphrasing is a highly cultural activity. To truly grasp this skill, novice L2 writers need to develop an adequate understanding of what it is and why it should be used. Such an understanding is heavily based on the knowledge of the cultural expectations associated with paraphrasing and source-based writing. Therefore, instead of only focusing on the linguistic procedures of paraphrasing, L2 writing instructors need to discuss the rationales behind the practice and provide ample opportunities for ESL students to explore the value of this particular practice. In other words, more effort needs to be made to socialize students into paraphrasing as a culturally-mediated form of engagement with source texts. It is not until teachers fully acknowledge the benefits of

this skill and help students understand why paraphrasing matters that they will become active users of it in their own writing. For example, teachers can assign writing tasks that invite students to analyze academic source texts written by experienced academic writers and discuss how the different textual appropriation strategies, paraphrasing, quoting and summarizing, play out in achieving varied rhetorical purposes. They can also include in class lectures topics about Western views of intellectual property and the teachers' own assumptions as related to textual appropriation. As Robillard (2007) points out, readers play an important role in determining the level of appropriateness of textual appropriation behaviors. In the case of an ESL writing class, the reader is primarily the instructor (although ideally the students are writing for a broader audience). In order to help novice L2 writers demystify the cultural practice of paraphrasing, writing instructors need to explicitly discuss their assumptions and expectations as readers of students' paraphrases. Such discussions will help to bridge the gap between what the instructors know as insiders of the academy and what novice L2 writers know as new comers, thus making it easier for novice writers to visualize the often abstract goals and objectives set for their paraphrasing practices.

In addition, it is also important for writing instructors to take into consideration L2 writers' previous literacy backgrounds and the conventions associated with textual appropriation in their L1 writing systems. It is very likely for ESL students to hold an understanding about source use that is considerably different from what is expected in the English academic context. Because of this, what is simple and clear-cut to the instructor could be perplexing and baffling to the students. It is essential for instructors to

understand the cultural schema that ESL students bring with them and provide opportunities for learners to discuss their ideas about source use developed in L1 writing. Knowing where the L2 students are coming from will help instructors to develop a culturally sensitive curriculum that creates a comfortable environment for learners to negotiate with unfamiliar cultural expectations. Specifically, writing instructors can organize in-class discussions for novice L2 student to share their experiences with paraphrasing and source-based writing in their native languages and compare these experiences with the expectations in the English academic context. Teachers can also ask L2 students to select and analyze a representative text written in their native language, focusing on how source texts are incorporated into the writing. Teachers can provide such guiding questions as what types of sources were used in the text, what strategies the author used to incorporate the sources, and what purposes the author seemed to have for citing certain sources. Tasks like these will help writing teachers to gain a better understanding of the cultural backgrounds of their L2 students.

Within a cultural curriculum, it is also critical for L2 writing instructors to focus their teaching on the application of paraphrasing as a writing tool apart from the decontextualized procedures involved in paraphrasing. It is certainly necessary for instructors to introduce to novice L2 writers the common strategies used for paraphrasing; yet, what is more important in the teaching of paraphrasing is to help learners develop the ability to actually *use* the skill to achieve writing purposes. As the findings of the study have shown, decontextualized short paraphrasing exercises are not as effective as they are assumed by teachers to be. Although such exercises provide

students with opportunities to practice changing the wording of the source texts, they tend to give the students the false impression that paraphrasing is just a linguistic exercise that entails the manipulation of language. Naturally, the students will place more emphasis on maintaining the linguistic style of the source texts. In this sense, decontextualized paraphrasing exercises may lead the students to develop a rather narrow understanding of paraphrasing, which inevitably limits how they can use this skill in research paper writing.

To truly help novice L2 writers understand the rhetorical functions that paraphrasing can achieve, writing instructors need to engage students in contextualized exercises that actually require students to use paraphrasing as a skill. For example, teachers can provide students with academic texts that address a similar topic (and that are relatively easy to understand), ask them to underline key points presented in each text, and synthesize the authors' positions utilizing paraphrasing. Upon the completion of such a task, writing instructors can also invite students to discuss how they see the role of paraphrasing in the synthesizing process. By framing paraphrasing within such tasks as synthesizing, writing instructors will be able to help novice L2 academic writers to see paraphrasing as a means to a larger end rather than an end in itself. Exercises like this can function as bridges that shorten the distance between short paraphrasing exercises and research paper writing.

It is also necessary for writing instructors to discuss paraphrasing in relation to direct quoting and help students grasp the rhetorical differences between these two textual appropriation strategies. Rather than simply list the common situations where

direct quoting and paraphrasing are respectively used, L2 writing instructors could offer concrete examples where the two strategies are used effectively (or ineffectively) for students to discuss and analyze. It is also important for L2 writing teachers to understand the origins and the implementation of students' use of direct quotation as a preferred way to incorporate source information. Discussion on the reasons why students choose direct quoting over paraphrasing in class (and tutorials) will be fruitful in revealing the understanding of these novice L2 writers as outsiders of the academy who carry certain rhetorical and cultural assumptions with them. All this knowledge is important for writing instructors to help novice L2 writers develop a more involved relationship with paraphrasing so that the students can actually use it for meaning making purposes.

Another important area of teaching that needs to be re-examined is the evaluation process. When providing feedback for students' paraphrases, writing instructors tend to focus only on the final product of the students' paraphrases, assessing the extent to which the paraphrases faithfully represent the meaning of the source texts and whether the paraphrases are free from the accusation of plagiarism. This product-oriented approach to feedback overlooks the attempts that novice L2 writers make as they try to understand the practice of paraphrasing. These attempts, many of which are probably unsuccessful, reflect the students' active negotiation with the culturally unfamiliar concept of paraphrasing and the expectations associated with it. To truly grasp the skill of paraphrasing and be able to use it in their writing, ESL writers need to take risks and experiment with different ways to follow the conventions of the new writing context. It is critical for writing instructors to acknowledge this developmental trajectory that ESL

learners go through and provide feedback that encourages students to continue with their experimentation, or what is commonly called assessment *for* learning (as opposed to assessment of learning). It seems safe to assume that how students are assessed in their efforts at paraphrasing will have an impact on how they attempt to learn it.

Looking at assessment from another angle, when providing comments for ESL students' paraphrases, writing instructors should keep in mind that these novice L2 writers may not possess the cultural schema needed to fully grasp the feedback. Instead of using such abstract words as "good" or "unfaithful" to evaluate students' paraphrases, for example, writing instructors should specify what these adjectives mean. By spelling out what is often hidden and taken for granted, writing teachers are helping to clear the paths that L2 writers need to go through trying to grasp the challenging skill of paraphrasing. What we need here, perhaps, is a new and creative set of evaluative criteria that breaks down the overarching learning objectives and acknowledges novice L2 writers' risk taking behaviors in their learning.

Given this study's important findings about the debilitating effects that can result from classroom associations made between paraphrasing and plagiarism, it is certainly necessary for writing instructors to introduce the concept of plagiarism to novice L2 writers with great care and with sensitivity to the effects that can arise from such instruction. Too much attention directed to plagiarism may unintentionally position paraphrasing primarily as an antidote to plagiarism, thus preventing learners from taking the risks necessary for them to develop into competent users of paraphrasing. It can also

divert students' attention from learning about paraphrasing to the potentially dire consequences that can result from ineffective attempts to paraphrase.

A final pedagogical implication based on the findings of this study concerns the role of reading in the teaching of paraphrasing and source-based writing. Although paraphrasing is often conceptualized as a writing skill, it is in fact a hybrid skill that requires a high level of both reading and writing proficiency. In order to use paraphrasing as a writing tool, novice L2 writers need to develop effective reading strategies that enable them to interact with source texts. In a sense, effective reading is the premise of effective paraphrasing, since paraphrasing actually begins with reading (the reading of what is to be paraphrased). When working on their research papers, for example, L2 writers need to be able to know what the main argument of an article is and which parts of the article are relevant to their writing. Reading strategies thus become critical to facilitate the students with their endeavors to identify appropriate information from source texts to paraphrase in their papers.

Writing instructors, therefore, can introduce common strategies used to interact with texts for writing purposes (e.g. taking notes, underlining and highlighting, etc.) and provide opportunities in class for students to experiment with these strategies. Teachers can also encourage students to discuss the challenges that they encounter when working with sources as readers and facilitate their discovery of potential strategies (e.g. use contextual cues to make informed guesses) that compensate for the learners' limited knowledge of academic texts. Without an adequate level of reading proficiency, novice L2 writers are unlikely to be able to utilize paraphrasing to its full potential. Therefore, it

is important for writing instructors to incorporate reading as an integral component of the writing curriculum and help novice L2 writers develop effective strategies to establish connections between reading and writing.

Being a writing instructor myself, I am aware that effective instruction is highly context-bound and that no one teaching approach is applicable to all situations. I am certainly not trying to offer a solution that will magically fix all the problems. What I have tried to do, instead, is to offer some tentative suggestions that I believe address the common challenges that novice L2 writers experience in their learning of paraphrasing. It is probably unrealistic to cover all that the students need to learn about paraphrasing, especially in relation to source-based writing, in one or two writing courses; yet, it is critical for composition courses to address key rhetorical and cultural elements that underline these tasks to help novice L2 writers develop a conceptual understanding of paraphrasing. Such an understanding will then guide the L2 students in their further exploration with textual appropriation in the disciplinary writing assignments with which they continue to engage. I hope the pedagogical implications outlined here will encourage more second language writing researchers and practitioners to dig into the complexities that it involves for novice L2 writers to acquire the linguistically, rhetorically and culturally challenging skill of paraphrasing.

7.3 Directions for Future Research

As a second language writer, I still vividly remember the days when I struggled to use paraphrasing to complete source-based writing assignments (literature review in my case) for my master's degree study in the U.S. I remember how confused I was while

reading one assignment sheet that included the appropriate use of paraphrasing as one of the evaluation criteria. I had studied English for over ten years before I came to the U.S., but I had never heard of the term *paraphrasing* before. In a sense, I was just like the participants in this study, wondering why it was necessary to change the wording of a text that was already elegantly presented and doubting my own competence in accomplishing such a daunting task. As I continued reading and writing for academic purposes, I have gradually come to see the point of paraphrasing and developed an adequate proficiency in doing it; yet, the challenges that I experienced in trying to figure out everything when knowing almost nothing have left a deep impression on me. It is this personal connection to paraphrasing and learning to write academically that partly motivated this study.

As I carried on with data collection and talked to the participants more and more, I became more aware of the importance of an emic perspective for conducting research on second language writers. Although I had some expectations about the challenges that these novice L2 writers would encounter as they learned to paraphrase, thanks to my own learning experiences and our shared cultural background, what the participants revealed to me was far more complex than what I had expected. For an experienced academic writer, paraphrasing is probably one of the simplest writing tasks; for these novice L2 writers, however, it was one of the most challenging tasks that they had ever encountered, linguistically, rhetorically and culturally. To unravel the difficulties and challenges that L2 writers experience as they are socialized into the English academic writing context, it is critical for L2 writing researchers to conduct studies that investigate the thinking and decision making processes of the novice writers.

For the present study of paraphrasing, think-aloud protocols and text-based interviews have proven tremendously useful in revealing how the participants made decisions as they practiced paraphrasing. Although these data collection techniques are not free from controversy, they do function as a way for writing researchers to get to know how novice L2 writers think as they engage in academic writing activities. Seeing the academic world from the eyes of these novice writers is essential for L2 writing researchers to truly understand how the students interpret and negotiate with concepts and practices often taken for granted by experienced academic writers. Studies that feature the voices of novice L2 writers, therefore, will provide invaluable insights into the teaching and learning of academic writing.

A second implication for future research on source-based second language writing is the importance of an increasing emphasis on the process of learning. Current research on novice L2 writers tends to focus on the final written products that they produce. Although such an analysis is valuable in revealing the problems that novice L2 writers need to overcome in order to grow into competent academic writing, it conceals the complexities that it involves for these students to acquire various writing skills. For the study of paraphrasing, for instance, it is not enough just to study the students' paraphrases and evaluate the extent to which the paraphrases are successful according to established academic standards. An academic socialization framework, in this regard, is an effective tool for researchers to use to capture the lived learning experiences of novice L2 writers.

For future research on paraphrasing and source-based writing, more studies are needed to examine how novice L2 writers negotiate between quoting, summarizing and

paraphrasing for the completion of different writing assignments (e.g. summary, research paper, etc.). Qualitative research that documents the learning processes of these novice L2 writers as they engage in source-based writing is critical in revealing the decisions that the students make and the challenges that they experience in both reading and writing. It is also important to explore the paraphrasing practices of different levels of ESL learners, ranging from undergraduate freshmen students to doctoral students studying in different disciplines. Such studies will shed light on the possibly different expectations associated with paraphrasing in different writing contexts and how L2 writers with various levels of linguistic proficiency wrestle with them.

Another direction of research that needs more attention is the study of rhetorical and cultural differences about source-based writing between ESL learners' native languages and English. Research along this line will provide insights about the cultural schema that L2 writers carry with them as they learn to write academically in English.

In addition, more research is needed to re-examine the fluid concept of paraphrasing, focusing on how experienced academic writers define and evaluate paraphrasing. Simple as it may sound, the activity of paraphrasing is in fact quite complex in nature, and what constitutes effective paraphrasing may vary across different academic communities. It is therefore important for second language writing researchers to study how paraphrasing is conceptualized in the academy in order to better help novice L2 writers socialize into the target writing context.

Finally, there is a need for much greater understanding of paraphrasing instruction from teachers' perspectives. Although this study did not focus on the teacher of the

writing course, the results suggest that there were shortcomings in the instructor's conceptualization of, and approach to, paraphrasing instruction. It would be helpful to know more about L2 writing teachers' thoughts about paraphrasing and about their decision-making while developing and employing instructional materials, techniques, and learning activities within units on paraphrasing.

7.4 Concluding Remarks

Drawing from the theoretical frameworks of language socialization and academic socialization, this study provided an inclusive portrait of novice L2 academic writers' negotiations with the linguistically, rhetorically and culturally challenging task of paraphrasing. The major contributions of this study include:

1. This study provided an emic perspective that is lacking in current literature. Hearing the voices of the students and understanding how they see the academic world will help L2 writing researchers and practitioners develop a more accurate understanding of the challenges that students encounter in academic socialization and their needs that should be addressed.
2. This study portrayed the lived experiences of novice L2 writers as they engaged in the learning of paraphrasing. Unlike previous research that tends to focus on the results of paraphrasing, this study unveiled the processes of learning to paraphrase. This shifted emphasis from products to processes is useful for the study of learning and development.
3. By adopting an qualitative design and utilizing multiple data collection and analysis methods, including questionnaire, think-aloud protocols, text-based

interviews, textual analysis, field notes, and observations, this study was able to reveal the complexities of paraphrasing, a seemingly simple and neutral writing task, thus providing methodological possibilities for L2 writing research.

4. The complexities revealed in the participants' attempts to paraphrase have reinforced the importance of conducting research on paraphrasing. Despite its presence in academic writing courses and the significance attached to it by writing teachers, as well as students' difficulties in gaining command of it, paraphrasing remains on the periphery of L2 writing research. This study, along with other research cited earlier, has shown that there remains much to be learned about paraphrasing, and that it is worth conducting research in this area. Paraphrasing matters, as does research about it. In addition to the insights it has provided, this study has highlighted the importance of paraphrasing research.

As a writing instructor, I have been wrestling with the teaching of paraphrasing for quite a while. Having observed for several years the challenges that my ESL students encountered when learning paraphrasing, I originally envisioned this study as a personal attempt to find better ways to teach paraphrasing and help my students with their academic writing endeavors. As the study unfolded, however, I realized that what I was dealing with was far more complex than what I had expected. What I have found in this study is probably just a tip of the iceberg, but I do hope that this "tip" has contributed some new perspectives to the teaching of and research on academic writing, and that the voices of the nine participants will inspire more second language writing researchers to

dig into the world of novice L2 writers, especially in the context of source-based writing (and reading).

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Appendix A: Questionnaire about Participants' Previous Writing Experience

Last four digits of your Columbus phone number: ________________________________
Gender: ____________________ Age: ________________________________
Major: ______________________ Native language: ______________________

Year of Study (Please circle one): *Freshman* *Sophomore* *Junior* *Senior*

1. How many writing courses have you taken in your native language?

2. What did you learn in the writing courses in your native language?

3. Were you taught how to cite or quote other people's words or ideas in the writing courses in your native language? If so, what did you learn about this?

4. What type of writing do you think is generally considered "good writing" in your native language.

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5. How many English writing courses have you taken so far (including the ones you took before coming to OSU)?

6. Have you been taught "paraphrasing" in any of the English writing courses you took in the past? If so, what did you learn about paraphrasing?

7. What is your current understanding of "paraphrasing"? How comfortable are you doing paraphrasing tasks?

If I ask you to translate the word "paraphrasing" into your native language, what would you say?